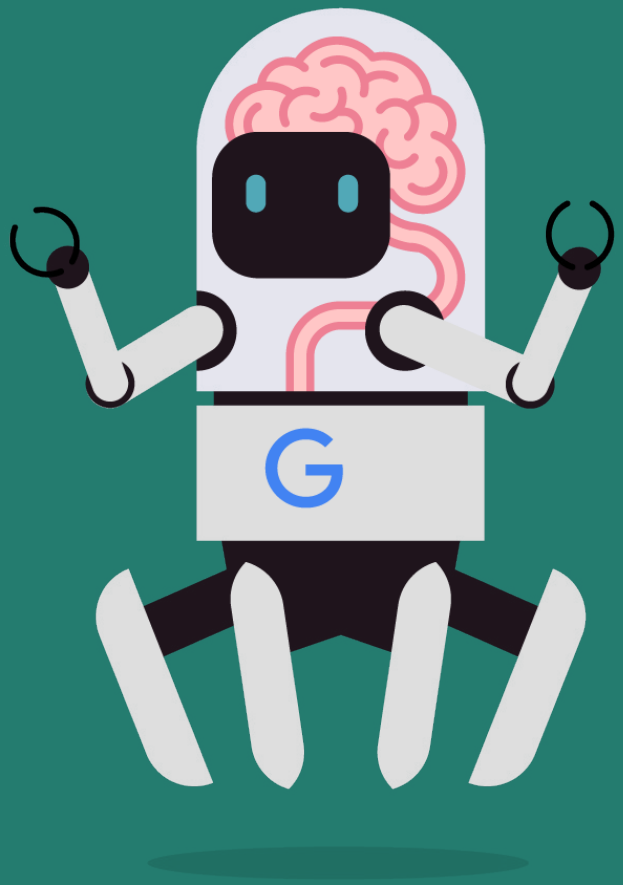
Google RankBrain

The Definitive Guide



BACKLINKO

BACKLINKO.COM

If you're serious about SEO, you NEED to optimize for RankBrain.

Why?

Well, Google recently announced that RankBrain is Google's third most important ranking signal.

And it's becoming more important every day.

In today's guide you're going to learn everything you need to know about Google's RankBrain algorithm. Let's do this.

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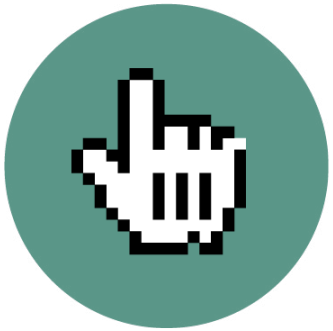

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Chapter 1

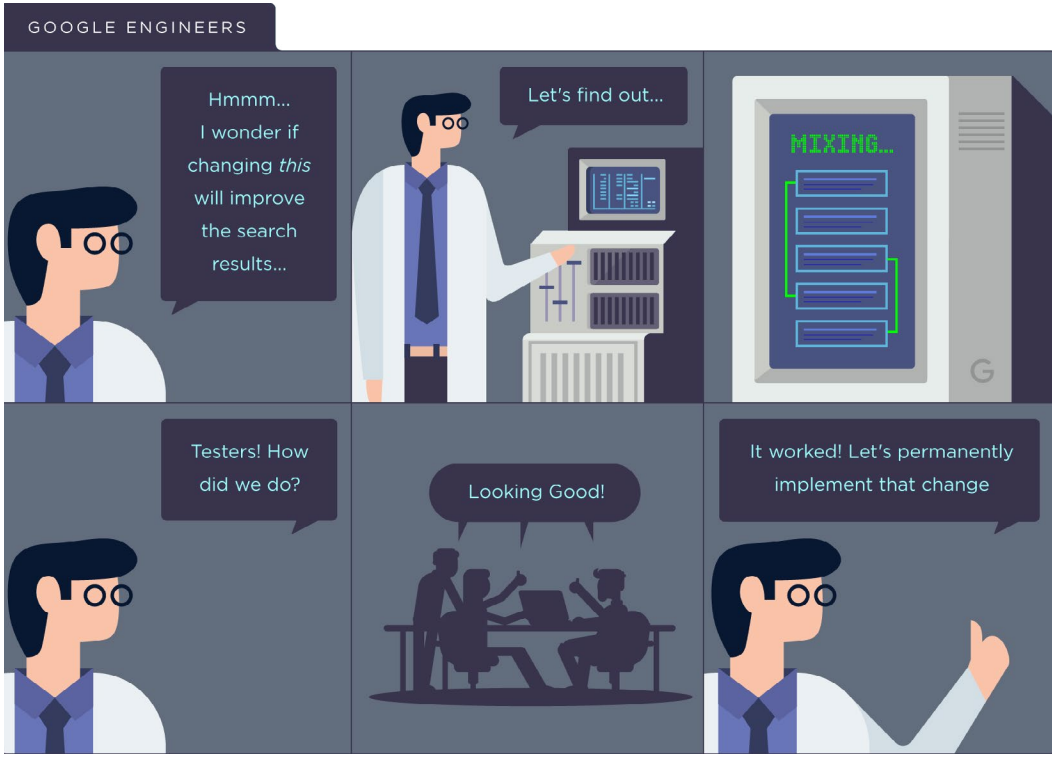
Google RankBrain: A Visual Explanation

What is Google RankBrain?

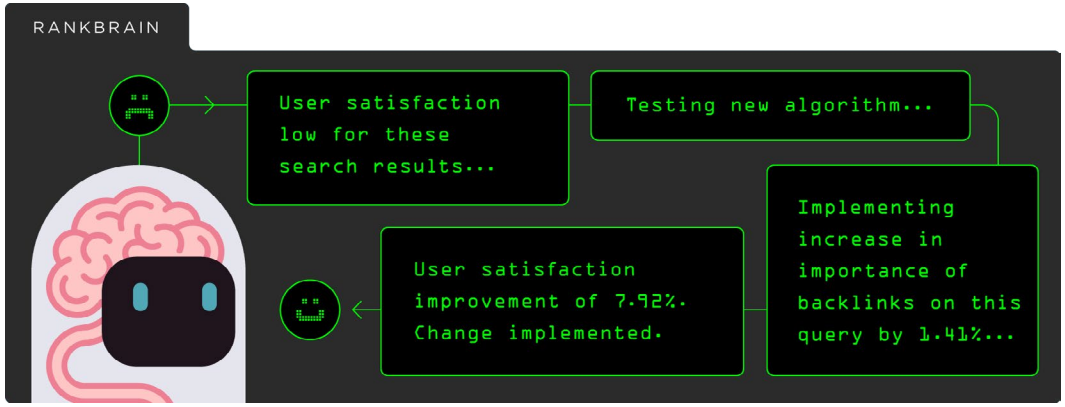
RankBrain is a machine learning (AI) algorithm that Google uses to sort the search results. It also helps Google process and understand search queries.

So: what makes RankBrain different?

Before RankBrain, 100% of Google's algorithm was hand-coded. So the process went something like this:


GOOGLE ENGINEERS
Hmmm... I wonder if changing *this* will improve the search results...
Let's find out...
MIXING...
Testers! How did we do?
Looking Good!
It worked! Let's permanently implement that change

Human engineers still work on the algorithm, of course. But today, RankBrain also does its thing in the background.


RANKBRAIN
User satisfaction low for these search results...
Testing new algorithm...
Implementing increase in importance of backlinks on this query by 1.41%...
User satisfaction improvement of 7.92%. Change implemented.

In short, RankBrain tweaks the algorithm on its own.

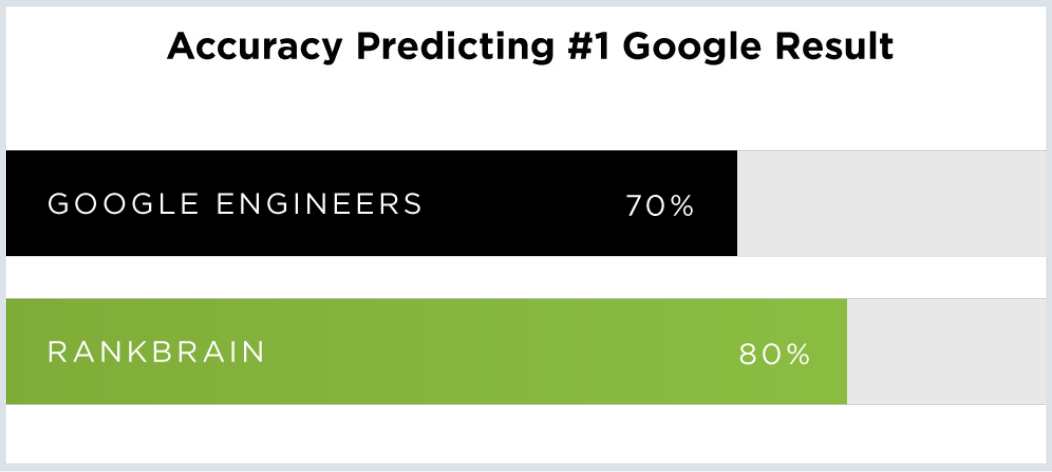
Depending on the keyword, RankBrain will increase or decrease the importance of backlinks, content freshness, content length, domain authority etc.

Then, it looks at how Google searchers interact with the new search results. If users like the new algorithm better, it stays. If not, RankBrain rolls back the old algorithm.

Here's the craziest part:

Google asked a group of Google Engineers to identify the best page for a given search. They also asked RankBrain.

And RankBrain outperformed brainy Google engineers by 10%!

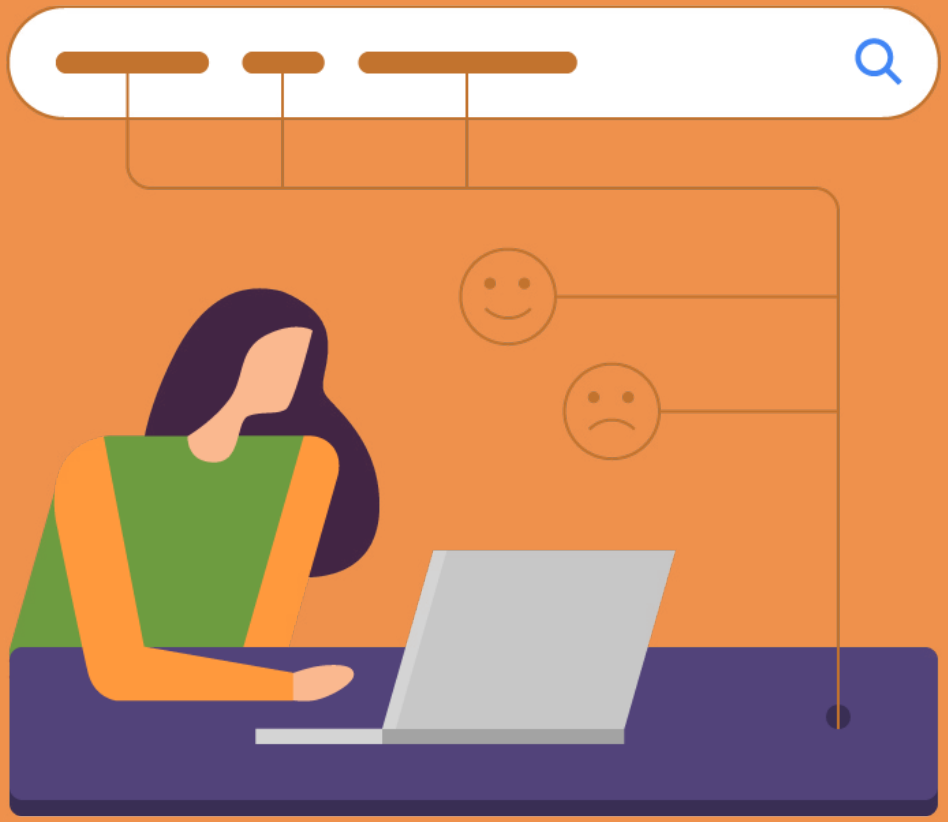


In short, RankBrain works. And it's here to stay.

Now that you've seen an overview of what RankBrain is, let's dive deeper into how it works.

Chapter 2

How RankBrain Works



RankBrain has two main jobs:

1. Understanding search queries (keywords)
2. Measuring how people interact with the results (user satisfaction)

Let's break each of these down.

How RankBrain Understands Any Keyword That You Search For

A few years ago, Google had a problem:

15% of the keywords that people typed into Google were never seen before.

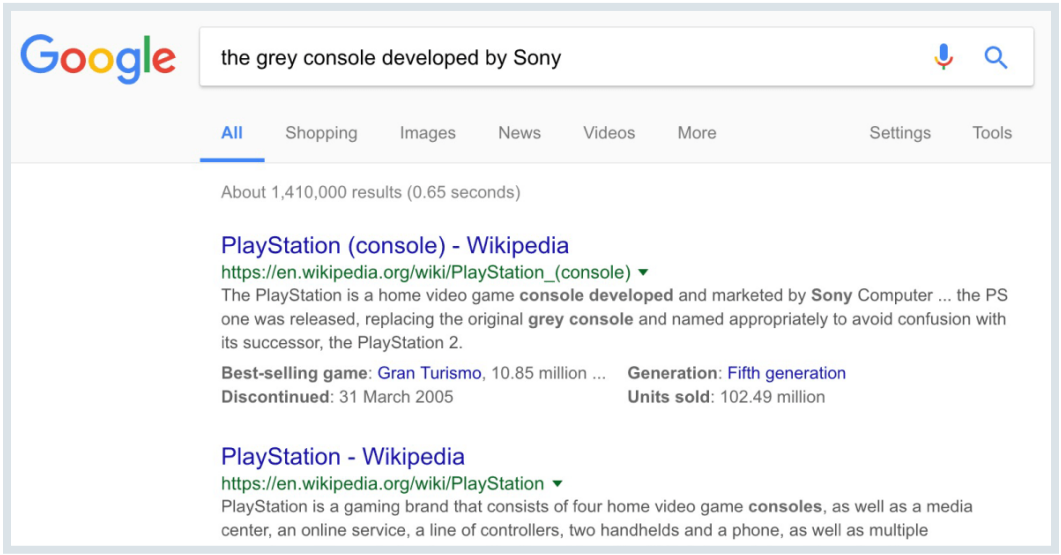
15% may not seem like a lot. But when you process billions of searches per day, that amounted to 450 million keywords that stumped Google every day.

Before RankBrain, Google would scan pages to see if they contained the exact keyword someone searched for.

But because these keywords were brand new, Google had no clue what the searcher actually wanted. So they guessed.

For example, let's say you searched for "the grey console developed by Sony". Google would look for pages that contained the terms "grey", "console", "developed" and "Sony".

Today, RankBrain actually understands what you're asking. And it provides a 100% accurate set of results:


Google
the grey console developed by Sony
All
Shopping
Images
News
Videos
More
Settings
Tools
About 1,410,000 results (0.65 seconds)
PlayStation (console) - Wikipedia
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PlayStation_(console)
The PlayStation is a home video game console developed and marketed by Sony Computer ... the PS one was released, replacing the original grey console and named appropriately to avoid confusion with its successor, the PlayStation 2.
Best-selling game: Gran Turismo, 10.85 million ...
Discontinued: 31 March 2005
Generation: Fifth generation
Units sold: 102.49 million
PlayStation - Wikipedia
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PlayStation
PlayStation is a gaming brand that consists of four home video game consoles, as well as a media center, an online service, a line of controllers, two handhelds and a phone, as well as multiple

Not bad.

What changed? Before, Google would try to match the words in your search query to words on a page.

Today, RankBrain tries to actually figure out what you mean. You know, like a human would.

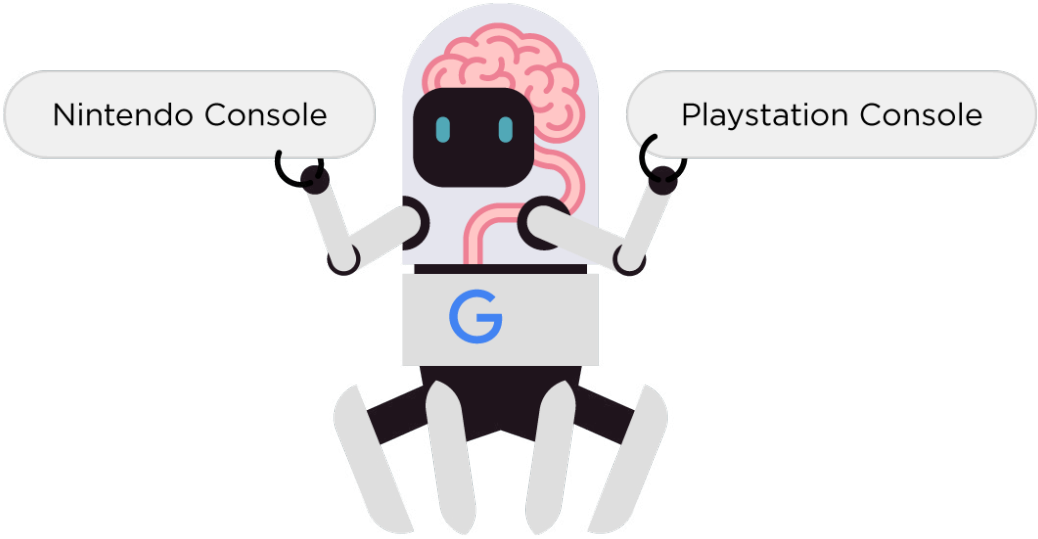
How? By matching never-before-seen keywords to keywords that Google HAS seen before.

For example, Google RankBrain may have noticed that lots of people search for “grey console developed by Nintendo”.

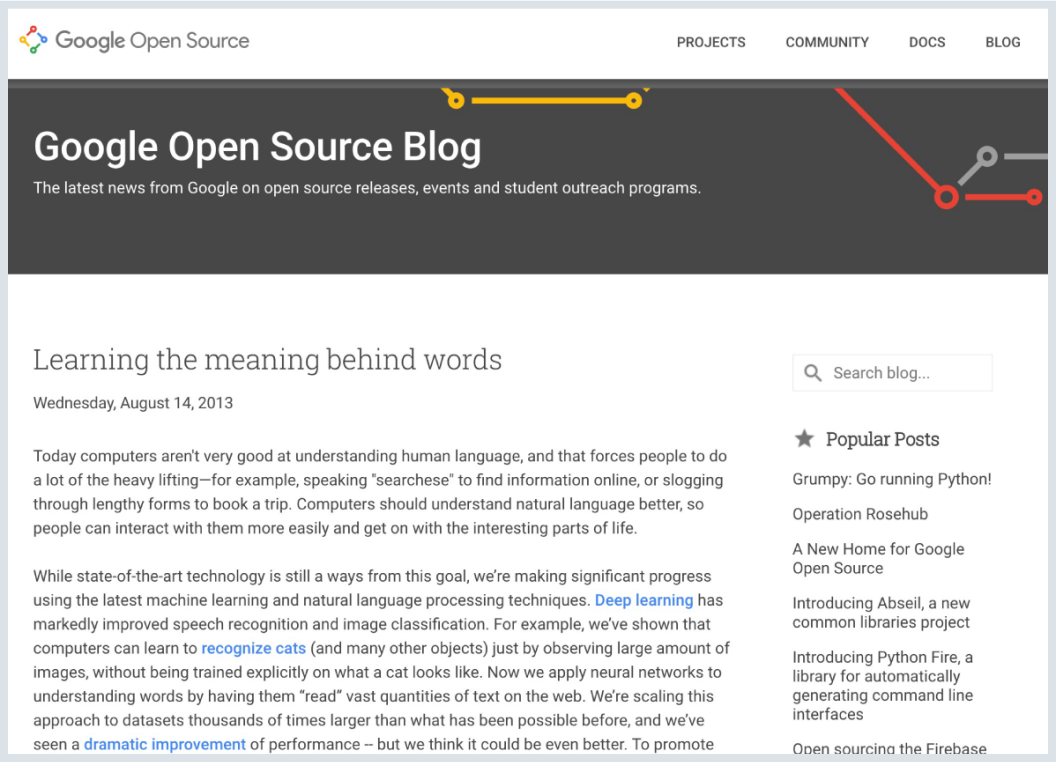
And they’ve learned that people who search for “grey console developed by Nintendo” want to see a set of results about gaming consoles.

So when someone searches for “the grey console developed by Sony”, RankBrain brings up similar results to the keyword it already knows (“grey console developed by Nintendo”).

So it shows results about consoles. In this case, the PlayStation.

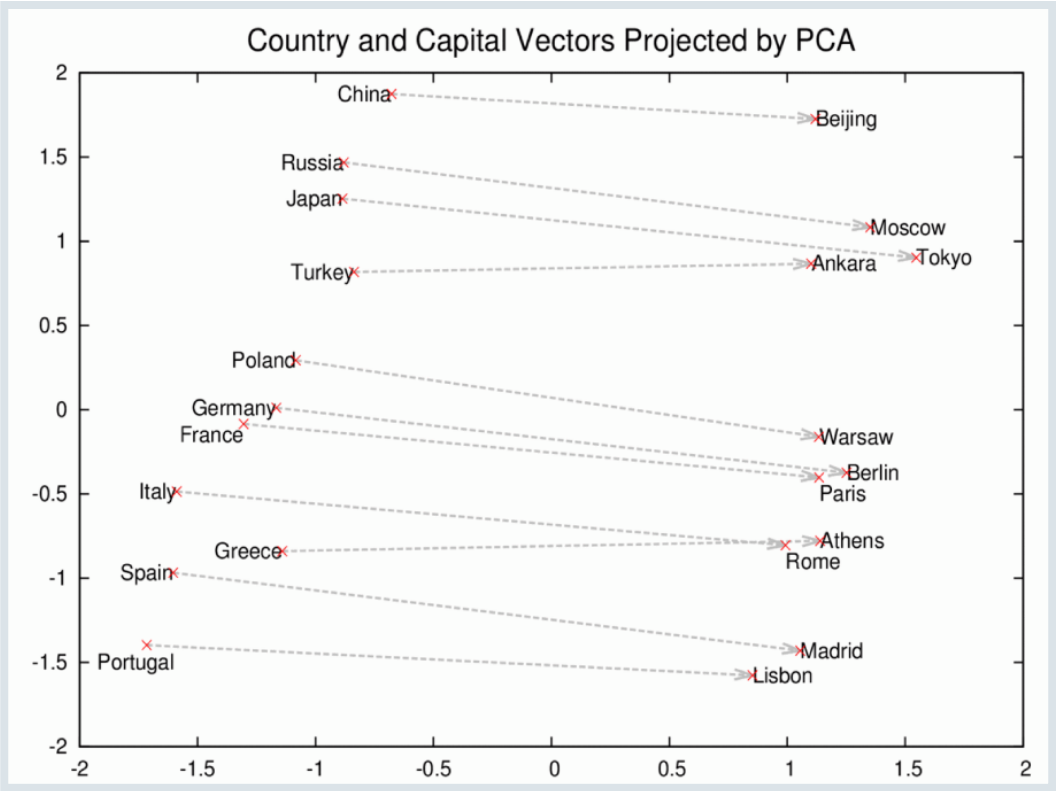


Another example: a while back Google published a blog post about how they're using machine learning to better understand searcher intent:


Google Open Source
PROJECTS
COMMUNITY
DOCS
BLOG
Google Open Source Blog
The latest news from Google on open source releases, events and student outreach programs.
Learning the meaning behind words
Wednesday, August 14, 2013
Today computers aren't very good at understanding human language, and that forces people to do a lot of the heavy lifting—for example, speaking "searchese" to find information online, or slogging through lengthy forms to book a trip. Computers should understand natural language better, so people can interact with them more easily and get on with the interesting parts of life.
While state-of-the-art technology is still a ways from this goal, we're making significant progress using the latest machine learning and natural language processing techniques. Deep learning has markedly improved speech recognition and image classification. For example, we've shown that computers can learn to recognize cats (and many other objects) just by observing large amount of images, without being trained explicitly on what a cat looks like. Now we apply neural networks to understanding words by having them "read" vast quantities of text on the web. We're scaling this approach to datasets thousands of times larger than what has been possible before, and we've seen a dramatic improvement of performance -- but we think it could be even better. To promote
Search blog...
Popular Posts
Grumpy: Go running Python!
Operation Rosehub
A New Home for Google Open Source
Introducing Abseil, a new common libraries project
Introducing Python Fire, a library for automatically generating command line interfaces
Open sourcing the Firebase

In that post they describe a technology called "Word2vec" that turns keywords into concepts.

For example, Google says that this technology "understands that Paris and France are related the same way Berlin and Germany are (capital and country), and not the same way Madrid and Italy are".



Even though this post wasn't talking specifically about RankBrain, RankBrain likely uses similar technology.

In short: Google RankBrain goes beyond simple keyword-matching. It turns your search term into concepts... and tries to find pages that cover that concept.

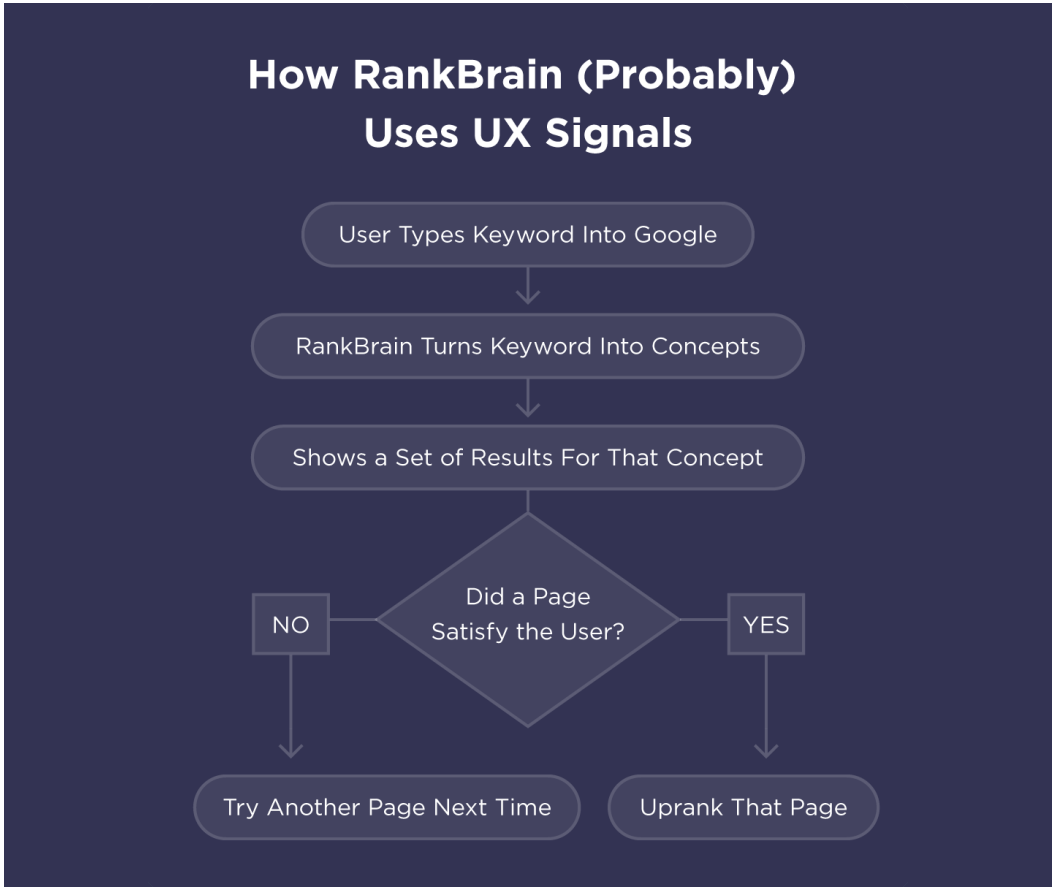
In chapter 3 I'll show you how this changes the way we should do SEO keyword research. But first, let's cover the most interesting element of what RankBrain does...

How RankBrain Measures User Satisfaction

Sure, RankBrain can take a stab at understanding new keywords. And it can even tweak the algorithm on its own.

But the big question is: Once RankBrain shows a set of results, how does it know if they're actually good?

Well, it observes:


How RankBrain (Probably) Uses UX Signals
User Types Keyword Into Google
RankBrain Turns Keyword Into Concepts
Shows a Set of Results For That Concept
Did a Page Satisfy the User?
NO
YES
Try Another Page Next Time
Uprank That Page

In other words, RankBrain shows you a set of search results that they think you'll like. If lots of people like one particular page in the results, they'll give that page a rankings boost.

And if you hated it? They'll drop that page and replace it with a different page. And the next time someone searches for that keyword (or a similar term), they'll see how it performs.

What is RankBrain observing exactly?

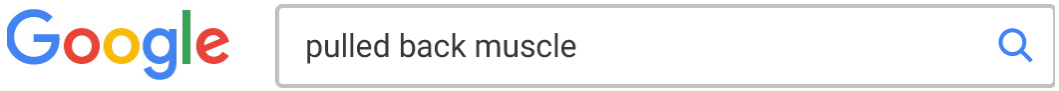
It's paying very close attention to how you interact with the search results. Specifically, it's looking at:

- Organic Click-Through-Rate
- Dwell Time
- Bounce Rate
- Pogo-sticking

These are known as user experience signals (UX signals).

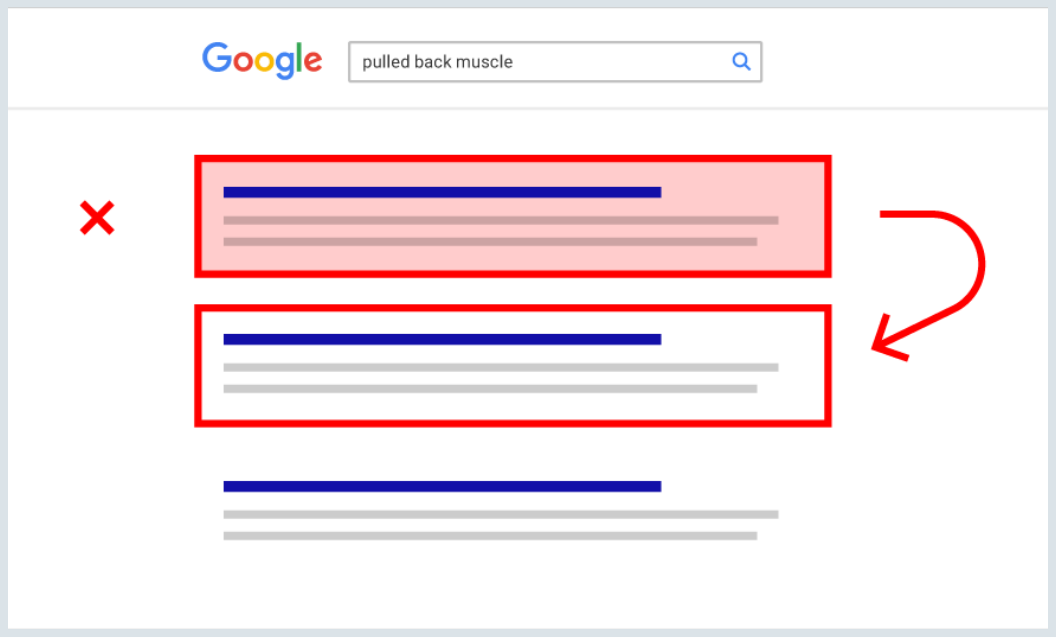
Let's look at an example:

You pulled a muscle in your back playing tennis. So you search for "pulled back muscle" in Google.



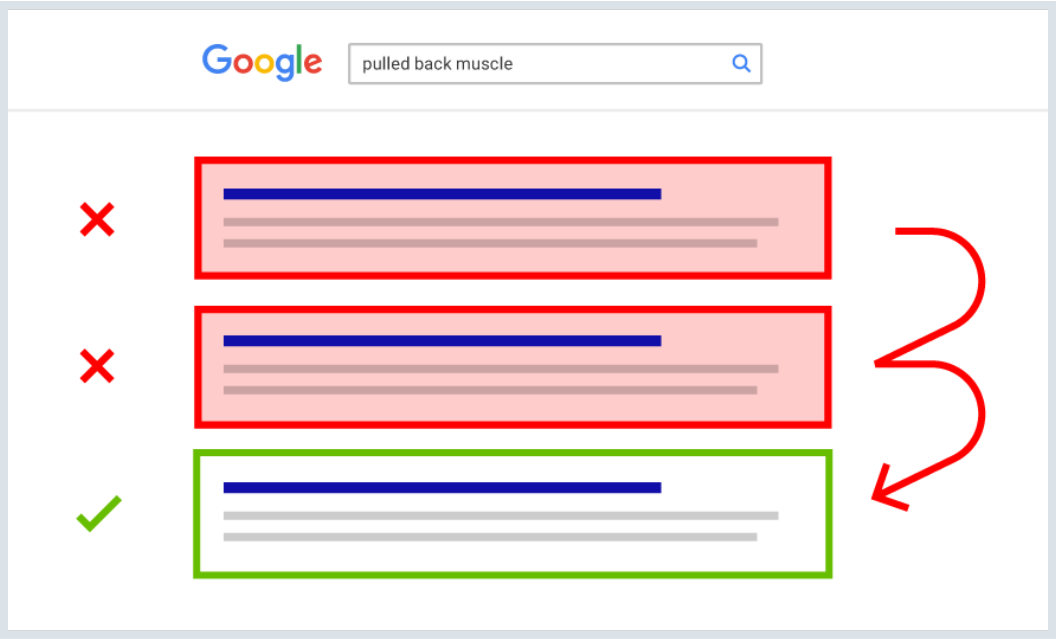
Like most people, you click on the first result. Unfortunately, the intro is full of fluff and filler content ("Your back is an important muscle group...").

So you hit your back button and check out the 2nd result:



This one isn't much better. It's full of generic advice like "rest and ice your back".

So you hit your browser's back button yet again and give result #3 a shot.

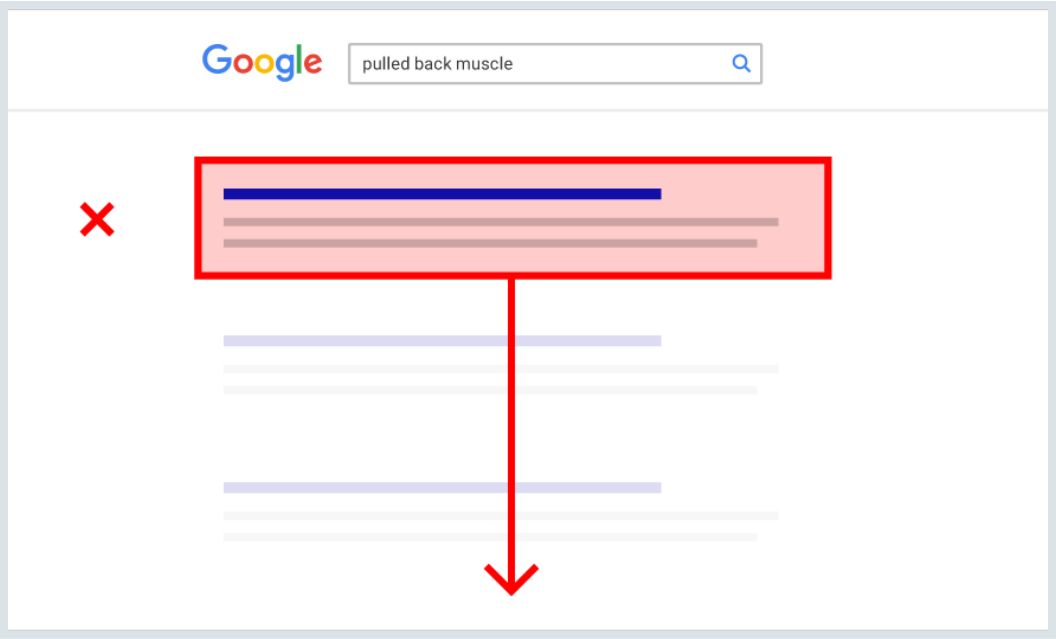


Bingo! This result is EXACTLY what you're looking for.

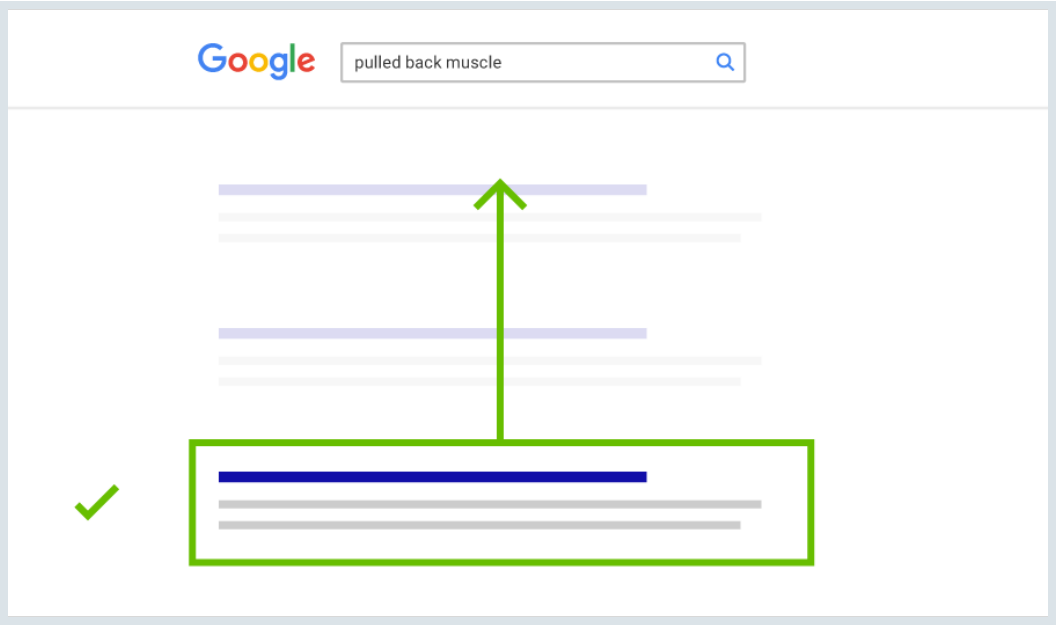
So instead of hitting "back", you spend 5 minutes reading through the page's physical therapy routine. And because you got what you wanted, you didn't revisit the search results.

This back-and-forth is called "Pogo-sticking". And it's something that RankBrain pays a lot of attention to.

If Google notices that people quickly leave a page to click on a different search result, that sends a strong message to Google: "That page stinks!".



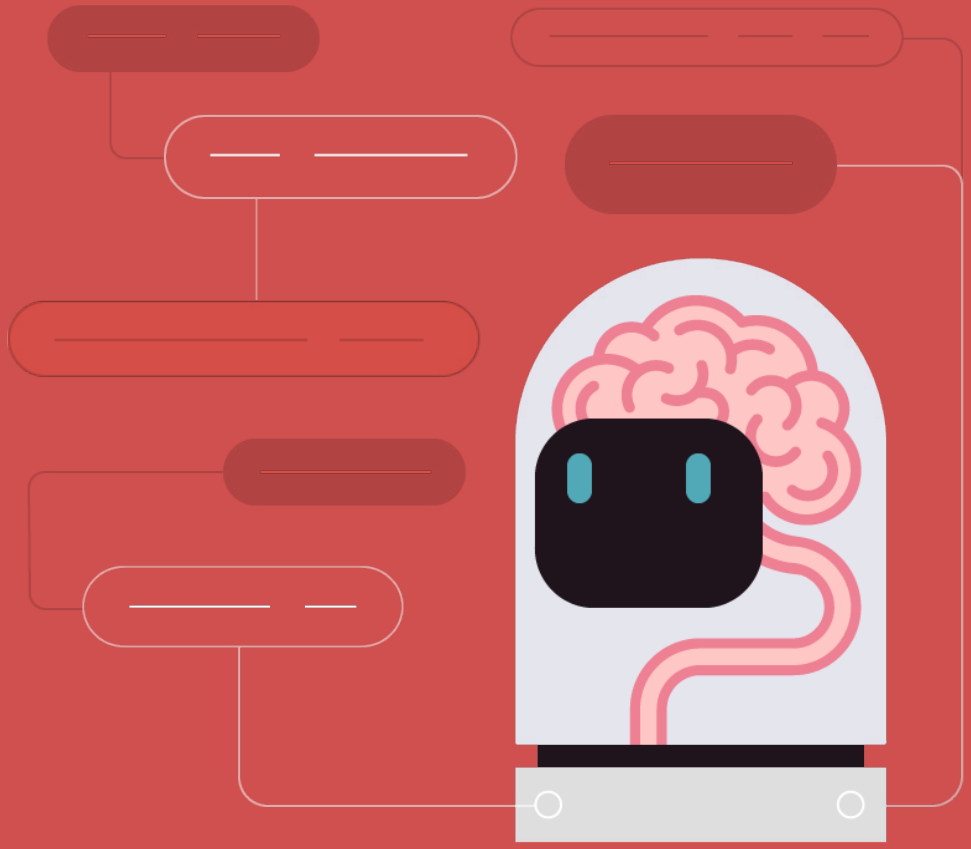
And if Google notices that lots of people STOP pogo-sticking on a specific result, they're going to give that page a boost to make it easier to find.



I'll have lots more on optimizing for UX signals in Chapters 4 and 5. But for now, it's time for me to show you how RankBrain changes how keyword research works.

Chapter 3

Keyword Research in a RankBrain World



As you saw, Google can now understand the INTENT behind a keyword.

So does that mean that traditional keyword research is dead?

Nope!

That said, you may need to tweak your keyword research process so it's more RankBrain-friendly.

Here's how:

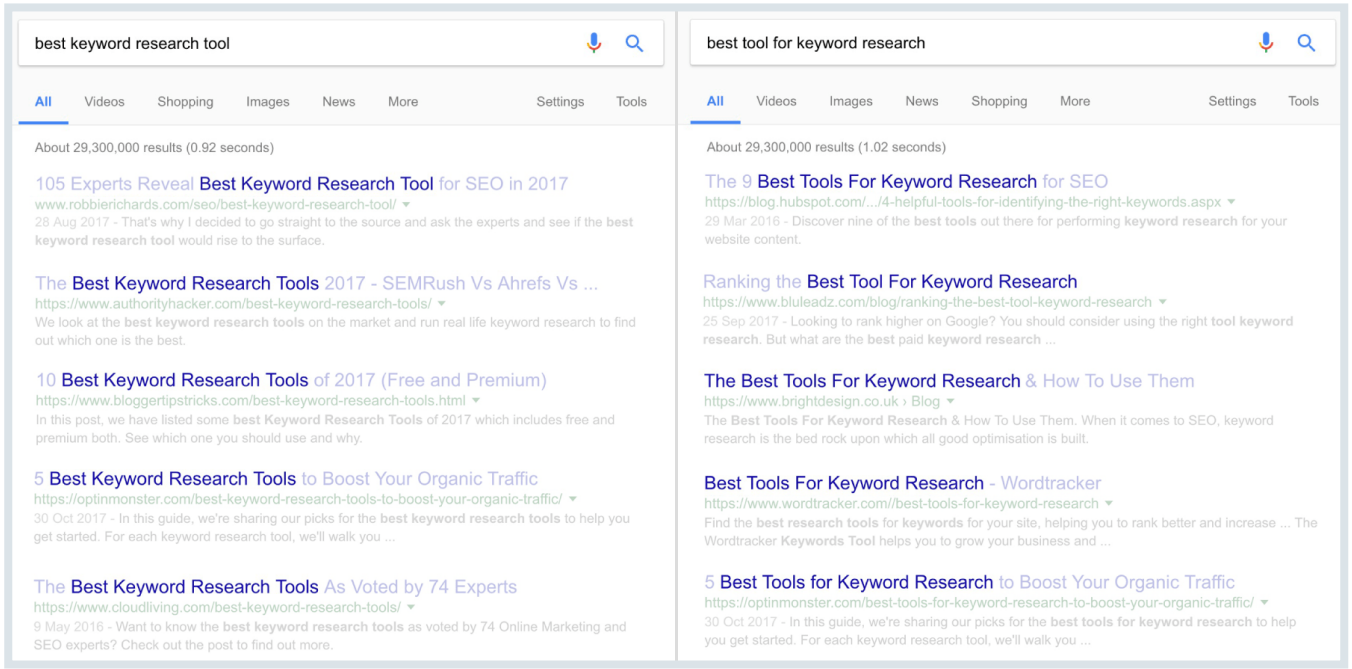
Ignore Long Tail Keywords (They're Obsolete)

Long tail keywords are dead. (There, I said it)

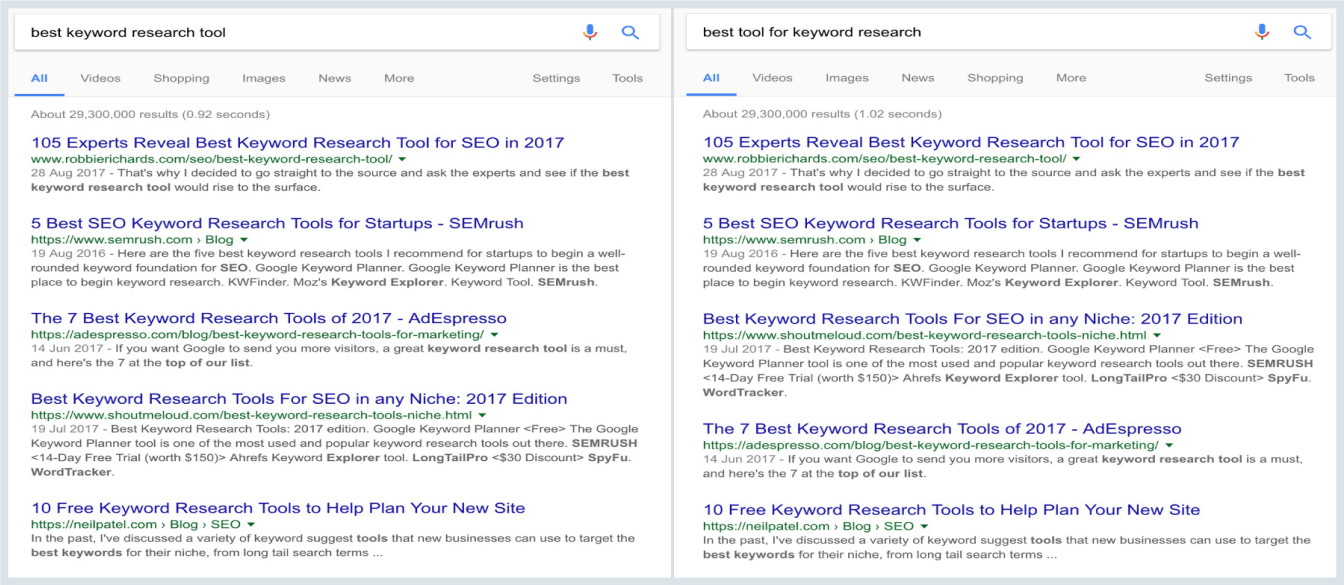
Back in the day it made sense to create hundreds of different pages... each one optimized around a different keyword.

For example, you'd create one page optimized for "best keyword research tool". And another optimized for "best tool for keyword research".

And old Google would rank each of them for their respective long tail keywords.


best keyword research tool
All Videos Shopping Images News More Settings Tools
About 29,300,000 results (0.92 seconds)
105 Experts Reveal Best Keyword Research Tool for SEO in 2017
www.robbierichards.com/seo/best-keyword-research-tool/
28 Aug 2017 - That's why I decided to go straight to the source and ask the experts and see if the best keyword research tool would rise to the surface.
The Best Keyword Research Tools 2017 - SEMRush Vs Ahrefs Vs ...
https://www.authorityhacker.com/best-keyword-research-tools/
We look at the best keyword research tools on the market and run real life keyword research to find out which one is the best.
10 Best Keyword Research Tools of 2017 (Free and Premium)
https://www.bloggertipstricks.com/best-keyword-research-tools.html
In this post, we have listed some best Keyword Research Tools of 2017 which includes free and premium both. See which one you should use and why.
5 Best Keyword Research Tools to Boost Your Organic Traffic
https://optinmonster.com/best-keyword-research-tools-to-boost-your-organic-traffic/
30 Oct 2017 - In this guide, we're sharing our picks for the best keyword research tools to help you get started. For each keyword research tool, we'll walk you ...
The Best Keyword Research Tools As Voted by 74 Experts
https://www.cloudliving.com/best-keyword-research-tools/
9 May 2016 - Want to know the best keyword research tools as voted by 74 Online Marketing and SEO experts? Check out the post to find out more.
best tool for keyword research
All Videos Images News Shopping More Settings Tools
About 29,300,000 results (1.02 seconds)
The 9 Best Tools For Keyword Research for SEO
https://blog.hubspot.com/.../4-helpful-tools-for-identifying-the-right-keywords.aspx
29 Mar 2016 - Discover nine of the best tools out there for performing keyword research for your website content.
Ranking the Best Tool For Keyword Research
https://www.bluleadz.com/blog/ranking-the-best-tool-keyword-research
25 Sep 2017 - Looking to rank higher on Google? You should consider using the right tool keyword research. But what are the best paid keyword research ...
The Best Tools For Keyword Research & How To Use Them
https://www.brightdesign.co.uk › Blog
The Best Tools For Keyword Research & How To Use Them. When it comes to SEO, keyword research is the bed rock upon which all good optimisation is built.
Best Tools For Keyword Research - Wordtracker
https://www.wordtracker.com//best-tools-for-keyword-research
Find the best research tools for keywords for your site, helping you to rank better and increase ... The Wordtracker Keywords Tool helps you to grow your business and ...
5 Best Tools for Keyword Research to Boost Your Organic Traffic
https://optinmonster.com/best-tools-for-keyword-research-to-boost-your-organic-traffic/
30 Oct 2017 - In this guide, we're sharing our picks for the best tools for keyword research to help you get started. For each keyword research tool, we'll walk you ...

Today, RankBrain understands that these terms are basically the same thing. So they show nearly identical search results.


best keyword research tool
All Videos Shopping Images News More Settings Tools
About 29,300,000 results (0.92 seconds)
105 Experts Reveal Best Keyword Research Tool for SEO in 2017
www.robbierichards.com/seo/best-keyword-research-tool/
28 Aug 2017 - That's why I decided to go straight to the source and ask the experts and see if the best keyword research tool would rise to the surface.
5 Best SEO Keyword Research Tools for Startups - SEMrush
https://www.semrush.com › Blog
19 Aug 2016 - Here are the five best keyword research tools I recommend for startups to begin a well-rounded keyword foundation for SEO. Google Keyword Planner. Google Keyword Planner is the best place to begin keyword research. KWFinder. Moz's Keyword Explorer. Keyword Tool. SEMrush.
The 7 Best Keyword Research Tools of 2017 - AdEspresso
https://adespresso.com/blog/best-keyword-research-tools-for-marketing/
14 Jun 2017 - If you want Google to send you more visitors, a great keyword research tool is a must, and here's the 7 at the top of our list.
Best Keyword Research Tools For SEO in any Niche: 2017 Edition
https://www.shoutmeloud.com/best-keyword-research-tools-niche.html
19 Jul 2017 - Best Keyword Research Tools: 2017 edition. Google Keyword Planner <Free> The Google Keyword Planner tool is one of the most used and popular keyword research tools out there. SEMRUSH <14-Day Free Trial (worth $150)> Ahrefs Keyword Explorer tool. LongTailPro <$30 Discount> SpyFu. WordTracker.
10 Free Keyword Research Tools to Help Plan Your New Site
https://neilpatel.com › Blog › SEO
In the past, I've discussed a variety of keyword suggest tools that new businesses can use to target the best keywords for their niche, from long tail search terms ...
best tool for keyword research
All Videos Images News Shopping More Settings Tools
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105 Experts Reveal Best Keyword Research Tool for SEO in 2017
www.robbierichards.com/seo/best-keyword-research-tool/
28 Aug 2017 - That's why I decided to go straight to the source and ask the experts and see if the best keyword research tool would rise to the surface.
5 Best SEO Keyword Research Tools for Startups - SEMrush
https://www.semrush.com › Blog
19 Aug 2016 - Here are the five best keyword research tools I recommend for startups to begin a well-rounded keyword foundation for SEO. Google Keyword Planner. Google Keyword Planner is the best place to begin keyword research. KWFinder. Moz's Keyword Explorer. Keyword Tool. SEMrush.
Best Keyword Research Tools For SEO in any Niche: 2017 Edition
https://www.shoutmeloud.com/best-keyword-research-tools-niche.html
19 Jul 2017 - Best Keyword Research Tools: 2017 edition. Google Keyword Planner <Free> The Google Keyword Planner tool is one of the most used and popular keyword research tools out there. SEMRUSH <14-Day Free Trial (worth $150)> Ahrefs Keyword Explorer tool. LongTailPro <$30 Discount> SpyFu. WordTracker.
The 7 Best Keyword Research Tools of 2017 - AdEspresso
https://adespresso.com/blog/best-keyword-research-tools-for-marketing/
14 Jun 2017 - If you want Google to send you more visitors, a great keyword research tool is a must, and here's the 7 at the top of our list.
10 Free Keyword Research Tools to Help Plan Your New Site
https://neilpatel.com › Blog › SEO
In the past, I've discussed a variety of keyword suggest tools that new businesses can use to target the best keywords for their niche, from long tail search terms ...

In short, optimizing for long tail keywords doesn't make sense anymore.

What should you do instead? Keep reading...

Optimize Around Medium Tail Keywords

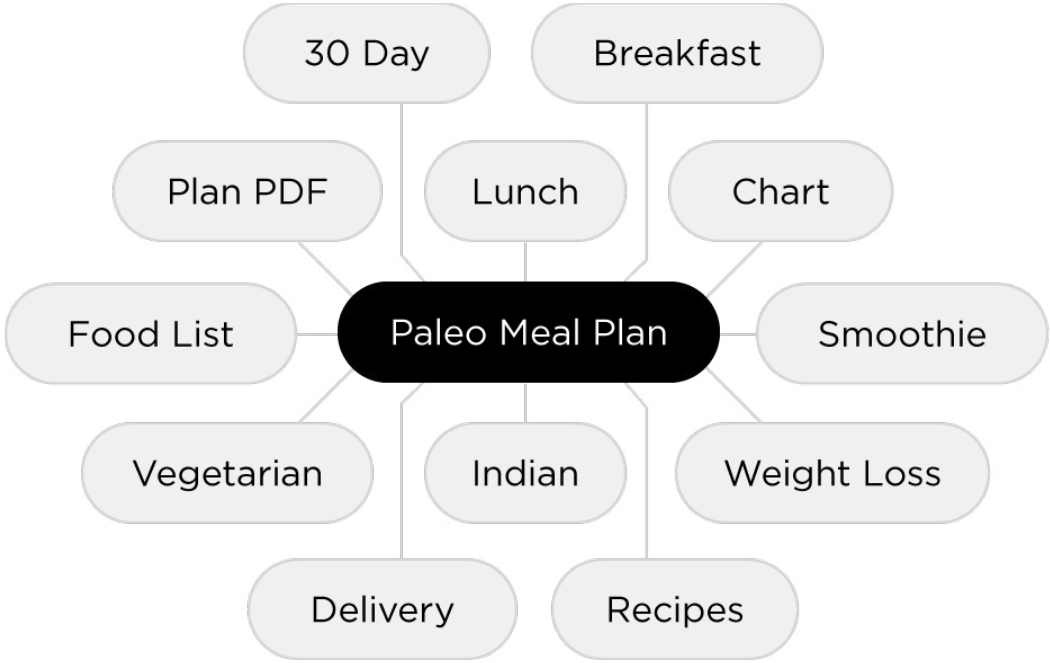
Instead of long tails, I recommend optimizing content around Medium Tail Keywords.

Medium Tail Keywords are middle-of-the-pack terms. They get more search volume than your average long tail. But they're not insanely competitive, either.

For example, here's a set of keywords around the topic of "Paleo Diet". The terms in the middle are Medium Tail Keywords.

Keyword	Search Volume
Paleo Diet	368,000
Paleo	74,000
Paleo Diet Recipes	9,900
Paleo Diet Food List	9,000
Paleo Meal Plan	6,600
Can You Eat Rice on the Paleo Diet	260
14 Day Paleo Diet	210

When you optimize your page around a medium tail keyword (and make that page awesome), RankBrain will automatically rank you for that term... and thousands of similar keywords.



In short, I recommend optimizing your page around a single keyword. (Just make sure it's a Medium Tail Keyword)

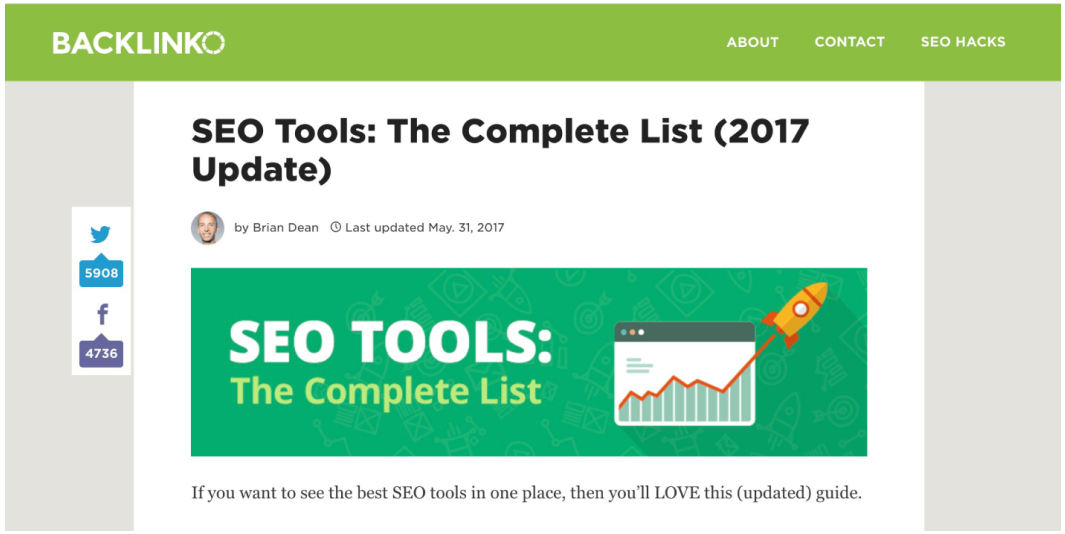
Then, let RankBrain rank your single page for lots of different related keywords.

How about an example of this process in action?

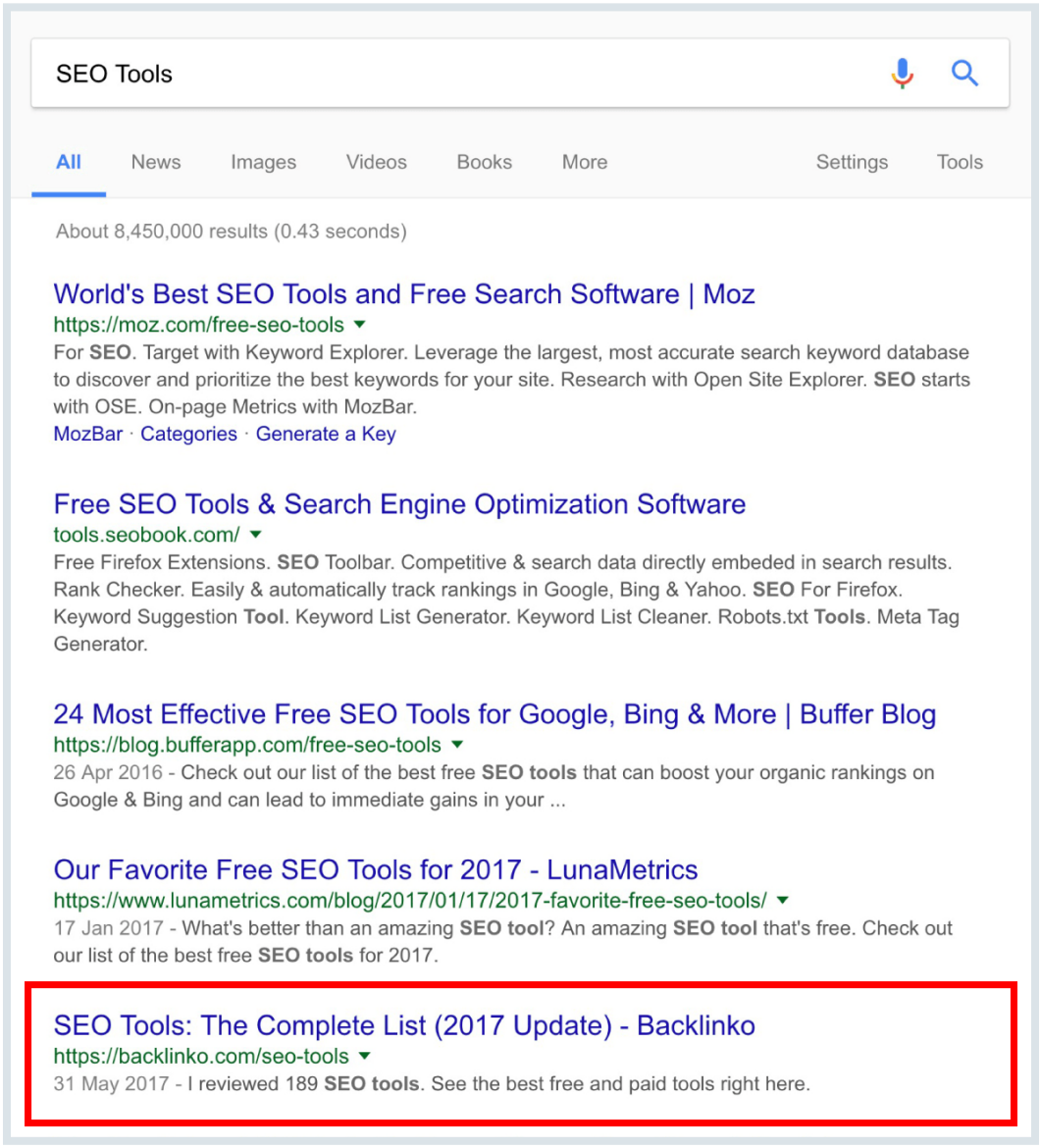
Example of Keyword Research and On-Page SEO in a RankBrain World

A while back I decided to write reviews for all of the SEO tools that I ever used.

The result? SEO Tools: The Complete List.

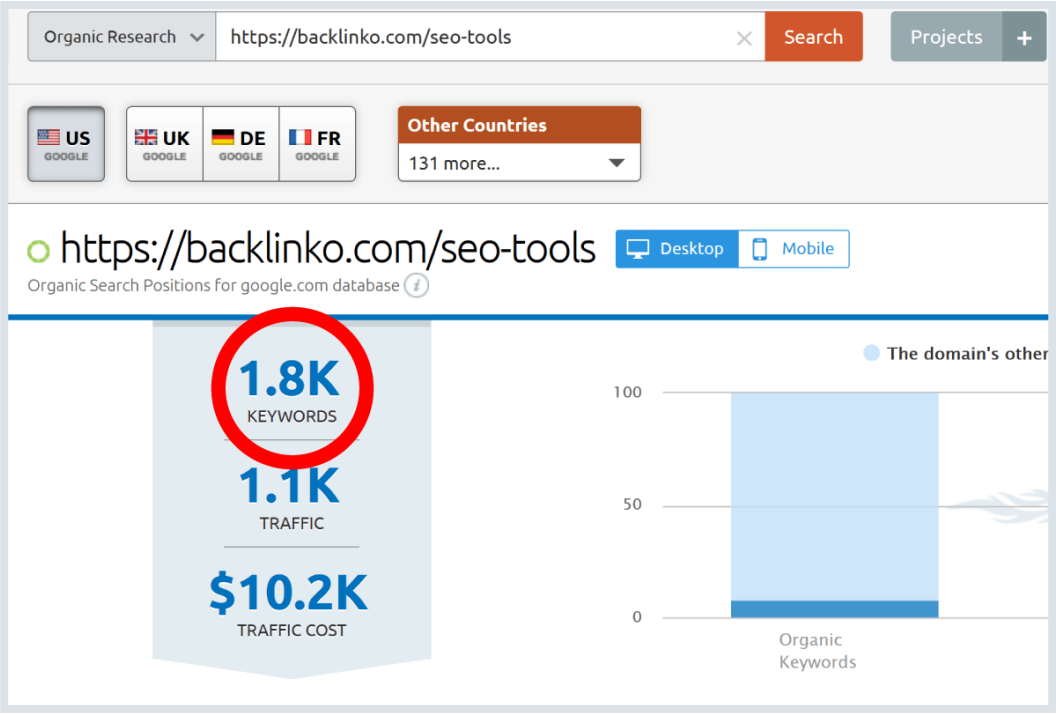


Because my content provides a ridiculous amount of value on a single page, it ranks in the top 5 for my target (Medium Tail) keyword: SEO Tools.


SEO Tools
All
News
Images
Videos
Books
More
Settings
Tools
About 8,450,000 results (0.43 seconds)
World's Best SEO Tools and Free Search Software | Moz
https://moz.com/free-seo-tools
For SEO. Target with Keyword Explorer. Leverage the largest, most accurate search keyword database to discover and prioritize the best keywords for your site. Research with Open Site Explorer. SEO starts with OSE. On-page Metrics with MozBar.
MozBar · Categories · Generate a Key
Free SEO Tools & Search Engine Optimization Software
tools.seobook.com/
Free Firefox Extensions. SEO Toolbar. Competitive & search data directly embeded in search results. Rank Checker. Easily & automatically track rankings in Google, Bing & Yahoo. SEO For Firefox. Keyword Suggestion Tool. Keyword List Generator. Keyword List Cleaner. Robots.txt Tools. Meta Tag Generator.
24 Most Effective Free SEO Tools for Google, Bing & More | Buffer Blog
https://blog.bufferapp.com/free-seo-tools
26 Apr 2016 - Check out our list of the best free SEO tools that can boost your organic rankings on Google & Bing and can lead to immediate gains in your ...
Our Favorite Free SEO Tools for 2017 - LunaMetrics
https://www.lunametrics.com/blog/2017/01/17/2017-favorite-free-seo-tools/
17 Jan 2017 - What's better than an amazing SEO tool? An amazing SEO tool that's free. Check out our list of the best free SEO tools for 2017.
SEO Tools: The Complete List (2017 Update) - Backlinko
https://backlinko.com/seo-tools
31 May 2017 - I reviewed 189 SEO tools. See the best free and paid tools right here.

But more important than that, RankBrain understands that my page is about concepts like: “SEO Tools”, “SEO software”, “keyword research tools” etc.

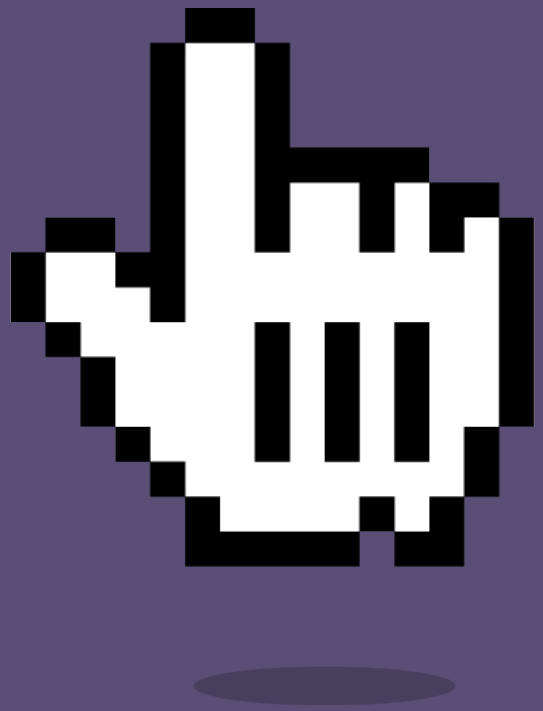
That’s why this single page ranks for 1,800 different keywords (according to SEMrush):



That’s the power of optimizing amazing content around a single, Medium Tail Keyword.

Chapter 4

How to Optimize Titles and Description Tags for CTR



As you saw in chapter 1, organic CTR is a key RankBrain ranking signal.

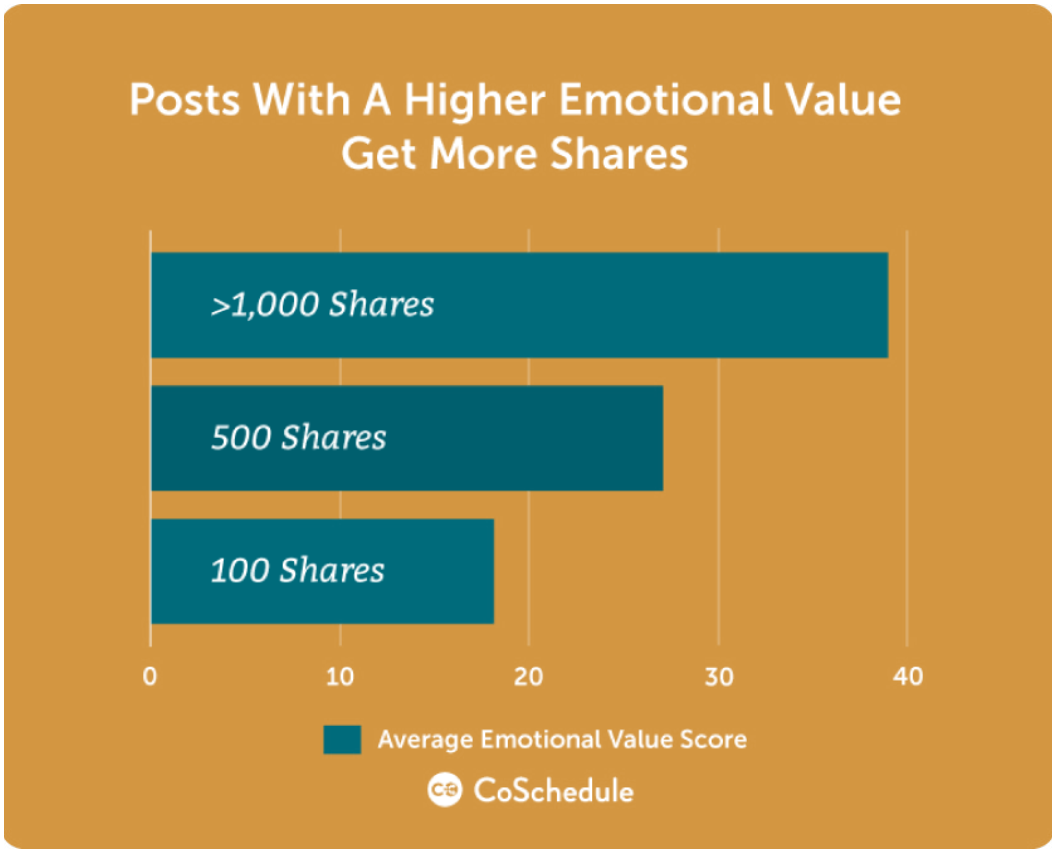
The question is: how can you get people to click on your result?

Well, that's exactly what I'm going to cover in this chapter.

Pack Your Title Tags With Emotion

There's no doubt about it: emotional titles get more clicks.

This is something copywriters have known for years. And in recent years this idea has been backed up with data. In fact, CoSchedule found a clear correlation between highly emotional headlines and social shares.



For example, here's a generic SEO-optimized title tag:

Productivity Tips: How to Get More Done

Not bad. But it lacks the "umph" that pushes people to click.

Here's how you could turn that title tag into an emotional powerhouse (while keeping it SEO-friendly):

Crush Your To-Do List With These 17 Productivity Tips

Now it doesn't always make sense to create highly-emotional titles. But whenever you can, you should.

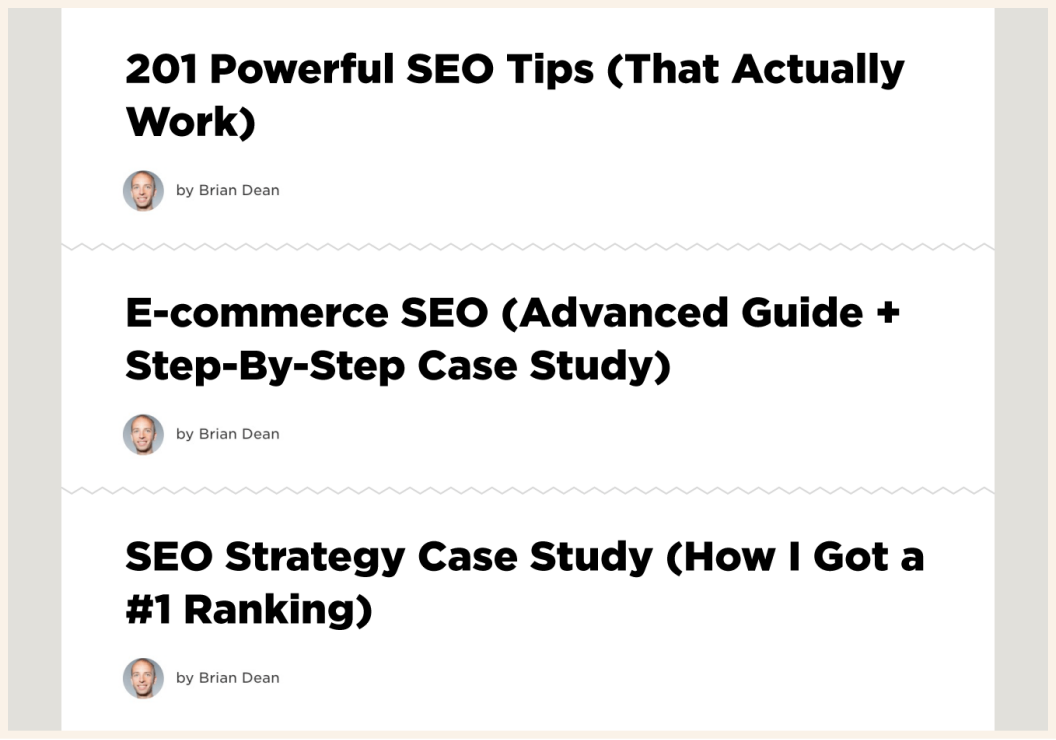
Add Brackets and Parentheses to the End Of Your Titles

This is my all-time favorite CTR hack.

I first discovered this tip from a study that HubSpot and Outbrain did a few years back...

In that study they analyzed 3.3 million headlines. And they found that brackets outperformed bracketless titles by 33%:

In fact, this little tactic works so well that I tend to include parentheses in most of my titles:


201 Powerful SEO Tips (That Actually Work)
by Brian Dean
E-commerce SEO (Advanced Guide + Step-By-Step Case Study)
by Brian Dean
SEO Strategy Case Study (How I Got a #1 Ranking)
by Brian Dean

Here are some examples of brackets and parentheses you can use:

- (2018)
- [Infographic] (New Data)
- [Report] (Case Study)
- (Proven Tips)

You get the idea

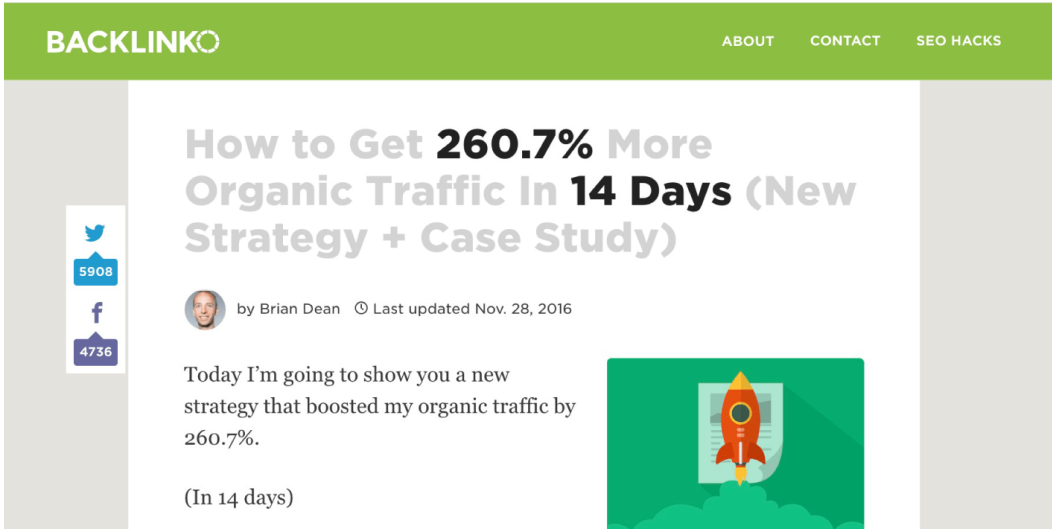
Use Numbers (And Not Just on List Posts)

The data from several sources (including BuzzSumo) is clear: numbers improve CTR.

The best part?

You can use numbers in your title... even if your content isn't a list post.

For example, last year I published this case study:


BACKLINKO
ABOUT
CONTACT
SEO HACKS
How to Get 260.7% More Organic Traffic In 14 Days (New Strategy + Case Study)
5908
4736
by Brian Dean
Last updated Nov. 28, 2016
Today I'm going to show you a new strategy that boosted my organic traffic by 260.7%.
(In 14 days)

As you can see, I included not one, but TWO numbers in the title.

Sprinkle Power Words Into Your Title Tags

Power Words are terms that pack a serious emotional punch.

You guessed it: using Power Words will help your title stand out and get more clicks.

Here's a list of some of my all-time favorite Power Words:

- Effective
- Insane
- That Will Case Study
- Examples
- Proven Study
- New
- Powerful

Don’t Forget to Optimize Your Description Tag for CTR

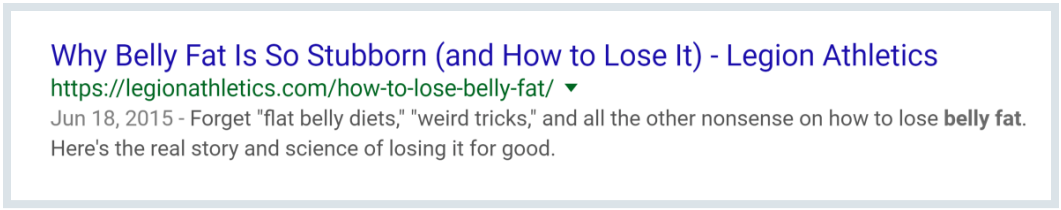
Yes, description tags don’t directly help with SEO anymore. That said, I’ve found that an optimized description can significantly boost your CTR.

Here’s how to create a description tag that gets results:

#1: First, make it emotional

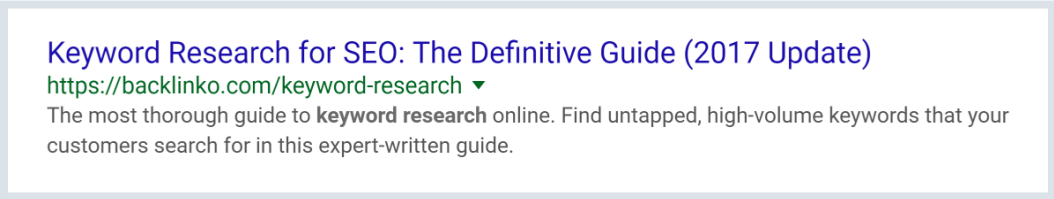
Just like with a title tag, you want your description tag to convey some emotion.

Here’s an example:


Why Belly Fat Is So Stubborn (and How to Lose It) - Legion Athletics
https://legionathletics.com/how-to-lose-belly-fat/
Jun 18, 2015 - Forget "flat belly diets," "weird tricks," and all the other nonsense on how to lose belly fat. Here's the real story and science of losing it for good.

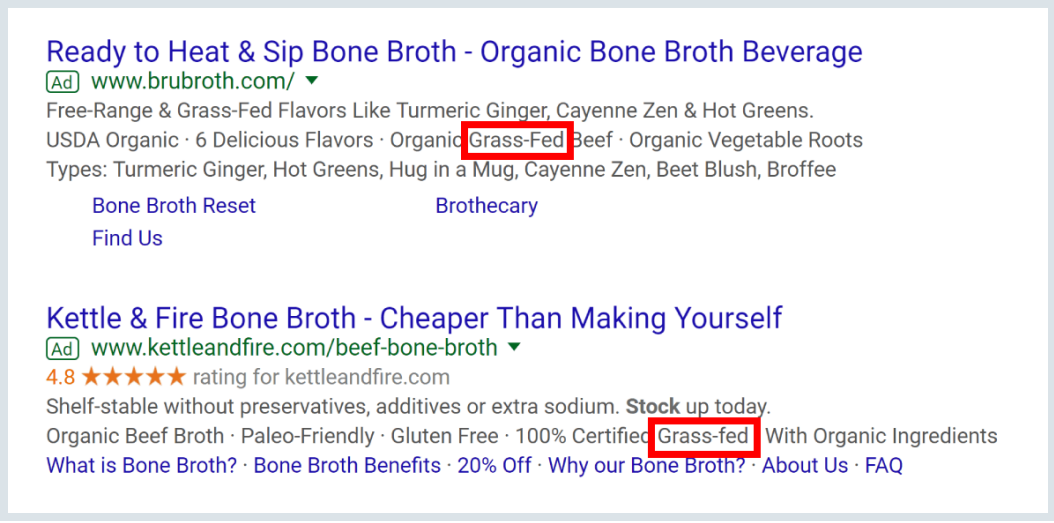
#2: Next, sell WHY someone should click on your result

Is your content comprehensive? Based on research? Funny? Sell that in your description:


Keyword Research for SEO: The Definitive Guide (2017 Update)
https://backlinko.com/keyword-research
The most thorough guide to keyword research online. Find untapped, high-volume keywords that your customers search for in this expert-written guide.

#3: Then, copy words and phrases that paid ads (AdWords) use

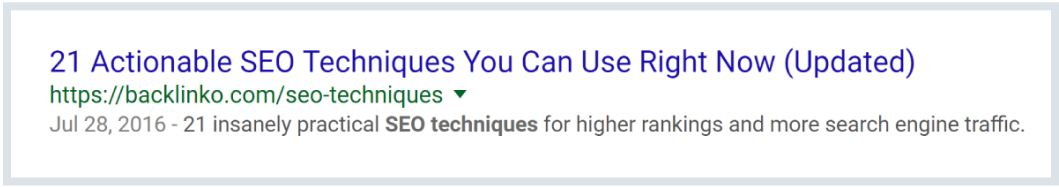
For example, when I search for "bone broth" I see this phrase appear in two ads:


Ready to Heat & Sip Bone Broth - Organic Bone Broth Beverage
Ad www.brubroth.com/
Free-Range & Grass-Fed Flavors Like Turmeric Ginger, Cayenne Zen & Hot Greens.
USDA Organic · 6 Delicious Flavors · Organic Grass-Fed Beef · Organic Vegetable Roots
Types: Turmeric Ginger, Hot Greens, Hug in a Mug, Cayenne Zen, Beet Blush, Broffee
Bone Broth Reset
Brothecary
Find Us
Kettle & Fire Bone Broth - Cheaper Than Making Yourself
Ad www.kettleandfire.com/beef-bone-broth
4.8 ★★★★★ rating for kettleandfire.com
Shelf-stable without preservatives, additives or extra sodium. Stock up today.
Organic Beef Broth · Paleo-Friendly · Gluten Free · 100% Certified Grass-fed With Organic Ingredients
What is Bone Broth? · Bone Broth Benefits · 20% Off · Why our Bone Broth? · About Us · FAQ

So you'd want to include the phrase "grass fed" in your meta description.

#4: Finally, include your target keyword

Google will make it bold, which can help your result stand out:


21 Actionable SEO Techniques You Can Use Right Now (Updated)
https://backlinko.com/seo-techniques
Jul 28, 2016 - 21 insanely practical SEO techniques for higher rankings and more search engine traffic.

That's all there is to it.

Chapter 5

How to Optimize Your Content for Bounce Rate and Dwell Time

OK so you used my CTR-boosting tips. And more people are clicking on your result than ever before.

Now what? Well, you need to show Google that your result makes their users happy.

And the best way to do that? Improve your dwell time.

Does Google REALLY Use Dwell Time? Yup!

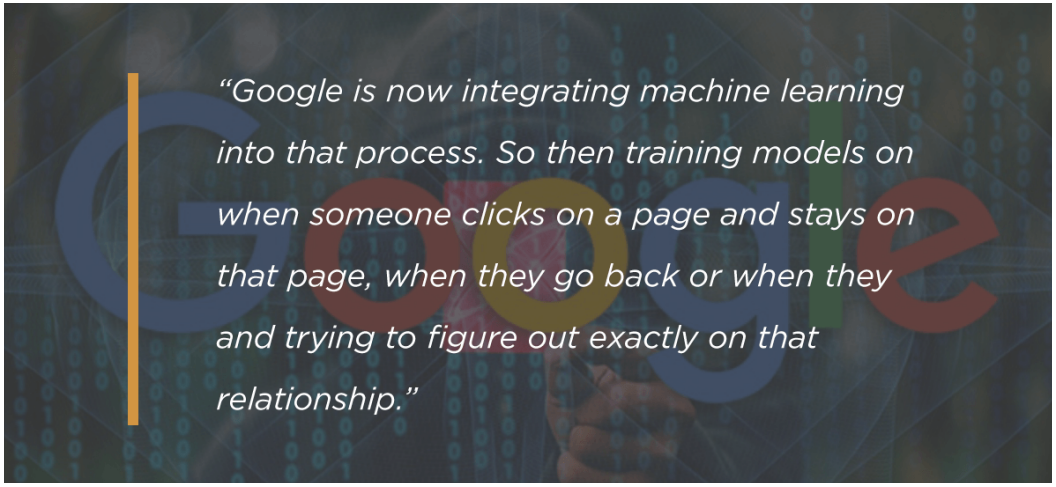
Dwell time is the amount of time a Google searcher spends on your site after clicking on your result.

Obviously, the longer someone spends on your page, the better. This tells Google: “Man, people are LOVING this result. Let’s bump it up a few spots”.

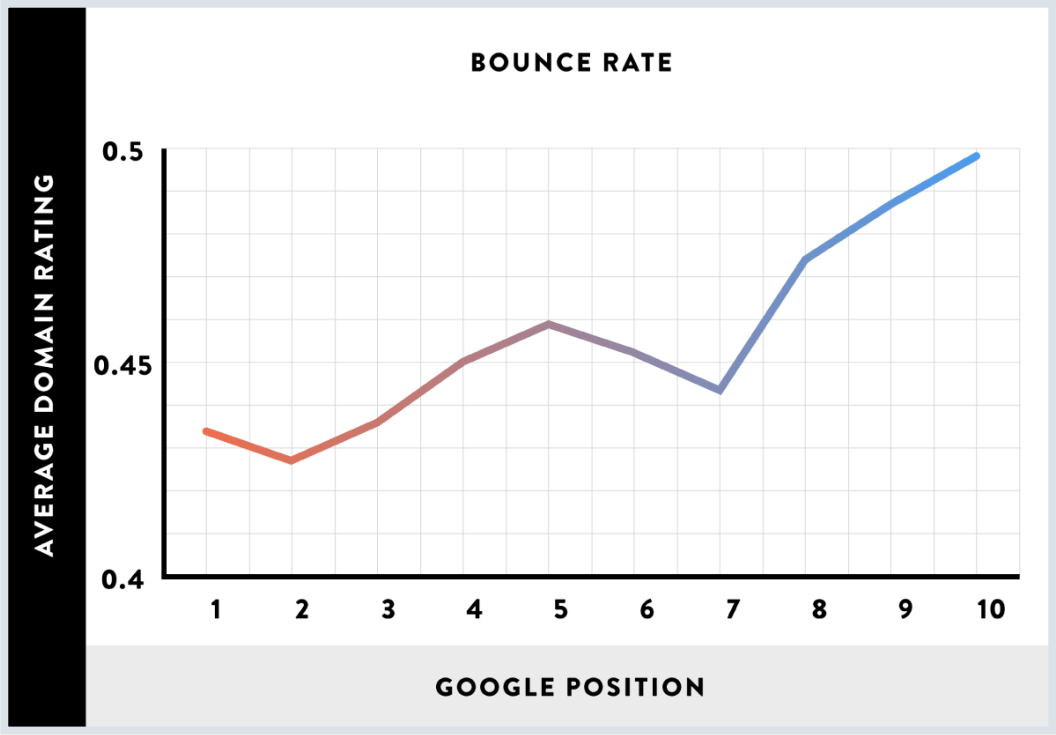
And if someone bounces from your site after 2 seconds, that tells Google: “This result stinks! Let’s drop it down a few spots”.

So it’s logical that RankBrain would measure Dwell Time — and shuffle the results around based on this signal.

In fact, a Google employee recently said that Google used to rely 100% on off-page signals (especially backlinks). Even though Google still uses backlinks, this employee pointed out that:


“Google is now integrating machine learning into that process. So then training models on when someone clicks on a page and stays on that page, when they go back or when they and trying to figure out exactly on that relationship.”

And the data backs this up. When we analyzed a massive set of Google search results we found a correlation between high rankings and low bounce rate:



How to Reduce Bounce Rate and Boost Dwell Time

Now it's time for me to share a few simple strategies that you can use to increase your site's dwell time.

1: Push Your Content Above the Fold

When someone clicks on your site from Google, they want their question answered NOW.

In other words, they don't want to scroll down to read your content.

That's why I highly recommend removing anything that pushes your content below the fold, like this:

RICE.
6 Easy-to-Follow Link Building Strategies & Tactics
While many people can understand that a website needs to be technically sound and that on-page

Instead, you want the first sentence of your content front-and-center:

BACKLINKO
ABOUT
CONTACT
SEO HACKS
On-Page SEO: Anatomy of a Perfectly Optimized Page (2017 Update)
by Brian Dean
Last updated Aug. 04, 2017
When it comes to on-page SEO, I'm sure you've heard enough about meta tags and keyword density for one lifetime.
If you're looking for some practical strategies that you can use on your site today, then you'll love this infographic.
It's a simple checklist that will bring in more search engine traffic from every piece of content that you publish:
Bonus: Download a free checklist that will show you how to quickly
Get Exclusive Traffic Tips
Learn how to get more traffic with exclusive tips and insights that I only share with my private newsletter subscribers.
Enter your email address...
Sign Up
When it comes to link building, Brian Dean is the best in the business.

That way, you'll hook your reader right off the bat.

#2: Use Short Intros (5-10 Sentences MAX)

Believe it or not, but I spend MORE time on my intros than my headlines.

That's because your intro is where 90% of your readers decide to stay... or go.

And after A LOT of testing I've found that short intros work best.

Why?

When someone searches for something in Google, they already know about that topic. So there's no need for a massive intro.

Instead, use your intro to sell the content they're about to read, like this:

White Hat SEO Case Study: How To Get a #1 Ranking
by Brian Dean
Last updated Sep. 29, 2016
Today you're going to learn how Emil rocketed his site to the #1 spot in Google.
(You'll also see how he turned this #1 ranking into $100k in monthly recurring revenue)
But wait, there's more
SEO CASE STUDY
#1 RANKING

When someone searches for "white hat SEO" reads that intro they think: "Awesome! I'm in the right place."

#3: Publish Long, In-Depth Content

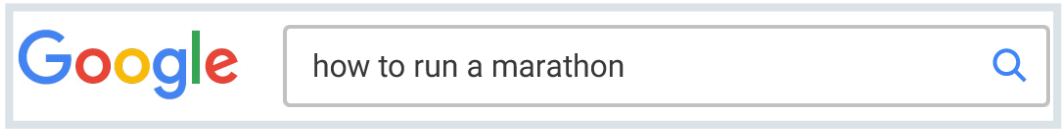
I've tested this ten ways to Tuesday. And I can tell you with confidence that:

Longer content=better Dwell Time.

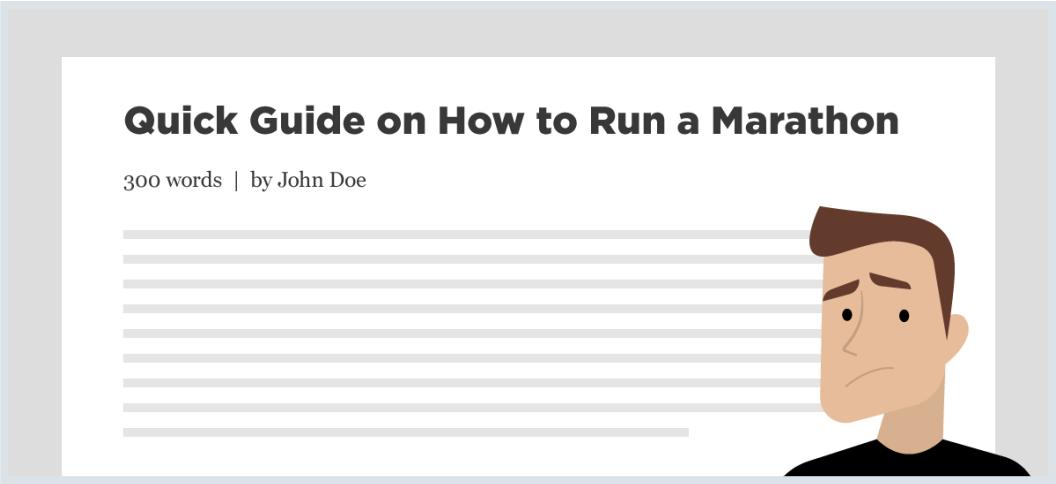
Obviously, it takes longer to read a 2000-word guide than a 400-word blog post. But that's only part of the equation.

The other reason that long form content improves Dwell Time is the fact that longer content can fully answer a searcher's query.

For example, let's say that you search for "how to run a marathon".



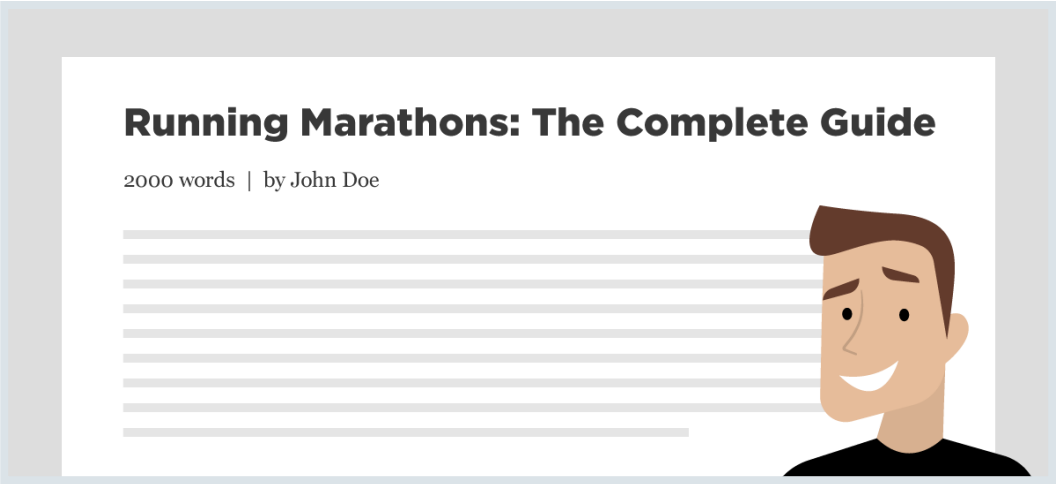
And the first result that you click on is a 300-word post. It kinda sorta answers your question... but leaves you wanting more.



So you click on your back button to find something better (as you might remember, Google calls this “Pogo-sticking”).

And this time you hit the jackpot.

You find a comprehensive guide that covers EVERYTHING you need to know about running a marathon.



So you grab a cup of coffee and read the guide from start to finish. You even re-read certain sections. All this reading is racking up serious Dwell Time.

Long form content works so well that I tend to ONLY publish content that's at least 2,000 words.

#4: Break Up Your Content Into Bite Size Chunks

Let's face it:

Reading 2,000 words is HARD.

And it's even harder if those 2,000 words are presented as a giant wall of text.

Fortunately, there's a simple way to get around this problem: subheaders.

Subheaders break up your content into digestible, bite-size chunks. This improves readability, and therefore, Dwell Time.

I use LOTS of subheaders at Backlinko for this exact reason:

Step 1: Publish an Awesome Infographic
Step 2: Simple (But Effective) Link Prospecting
Step 3: Show Them Your Infographic
Step 4: Bribe Your Prospects With Free Content

Specifically, I try to toss in a subheader for every 200 words of content.

Pro Tip: Avoid boring subheaders like “Backhand Drills” or “Stay Hydrated”. Instead, pack your subheaders with emotion. For example: “3 Simple Backhand Drills The Pros Use” and “What New Research Says About Staying Hydrated.”

Chapter 6

Bonus RankBrain Optimization Strategies and Case Studies

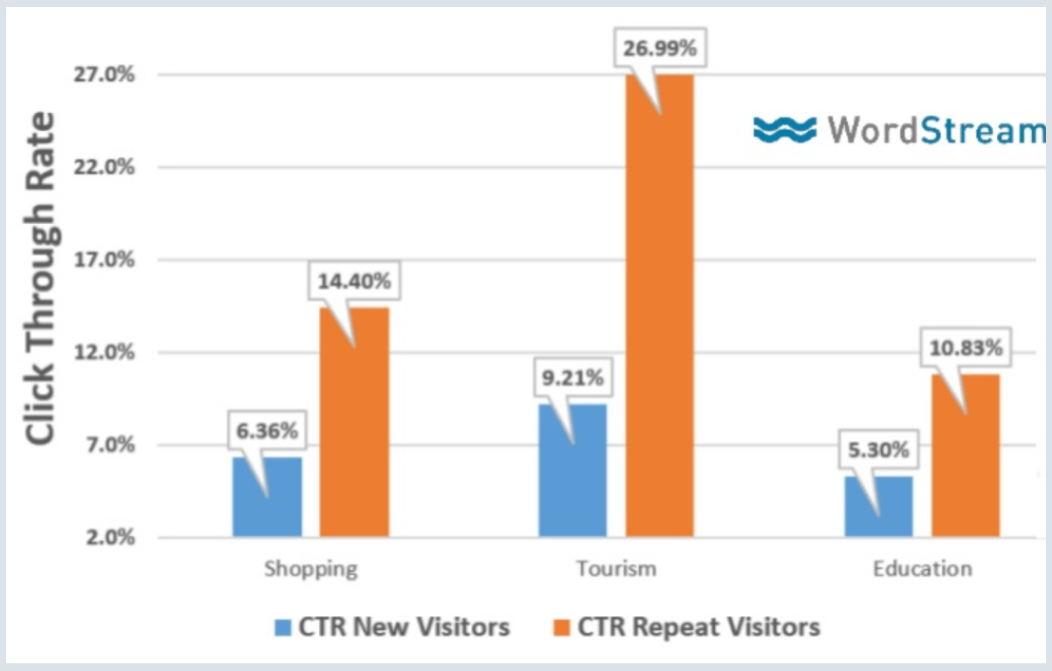
In this chapter I'm going to cover a handful of quick strategies that you can use to optimize your site for RankBrain.

Increase Brand Awareness. Improve CTR

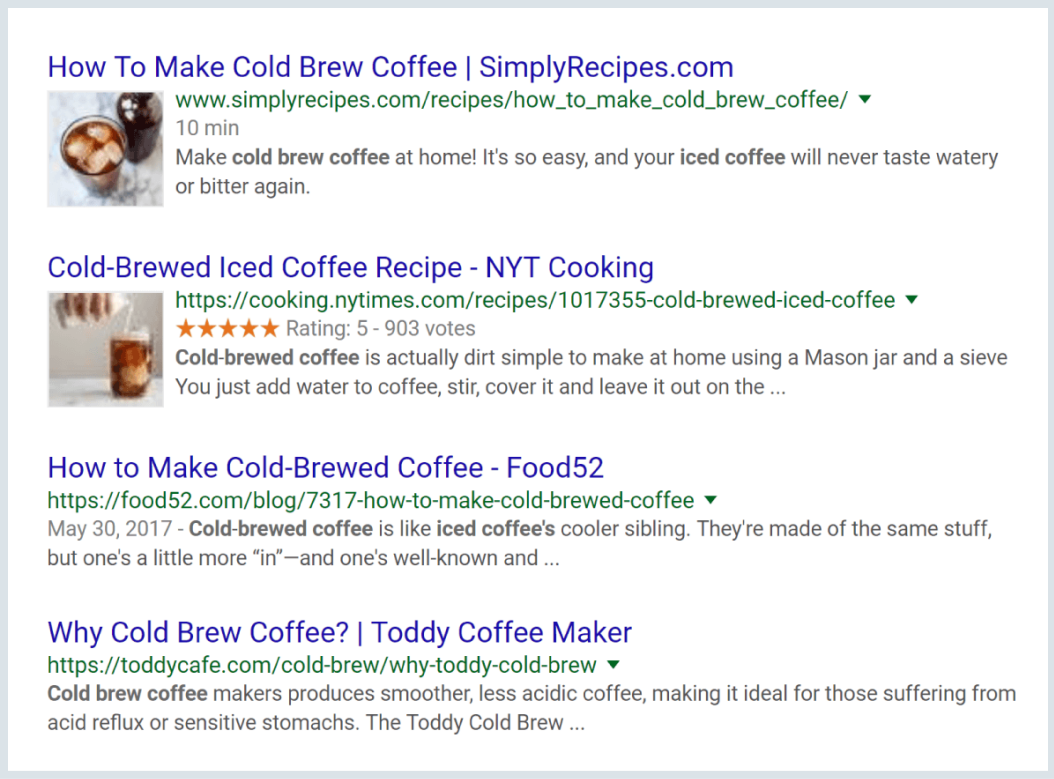
I already showed you how numbers, emotions and Power Words can improve your organic CTR.

But there's another HUGE variable that I haven't mentioned: brand awareness.

Needless to say, if someone knows your brand, they're more likely to click on your site in the search results. In fact, data from WordStream found that brand awareness can increase CTR by up to 342%!



For example, take a look at these search results:


How To Make Cold Brew Coffee | SimplyRecipes.com
www.simplyrecipes.com/recipes/how_to_make_cold_brew_coffee/
10 min
Make cold brew coffee at home! It's so easy, and your iced coffee will never taste watery or bitter again.
Cold-Brewed Iced Coffee Recipe - NYT Cooking
https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1017355-cold-brewed-iced-coffee
★★★★★ Rating: 5 - 903 votes
Cold-brewed coffee is actually dirt simple to make at home using a Mason jar and a sieve You just add water to coffee, stir, cover it and leave it out on the ...
How to Make Cold-Brewed Coffee - Food52
https://food52.com/blog/7317-how-to-make-cold-brewed-coffee
May 30, 2017 - Cold-brewed coffee is like iced coffee's cooler sibling. They're made of the same stuff, but one's a little more "in"—and one's well-known and ...
Why Cold Brew Coffee? | Toddy Coffee Maker
https://toddycafe.com/cold-brew/why-toddy-cold-brew
Cold brew coffee makers produces smoother, less acidic coffee, making it ideal for those suffering from acid reflux or sensitive stomachs. The Toddy Cold Brew ...

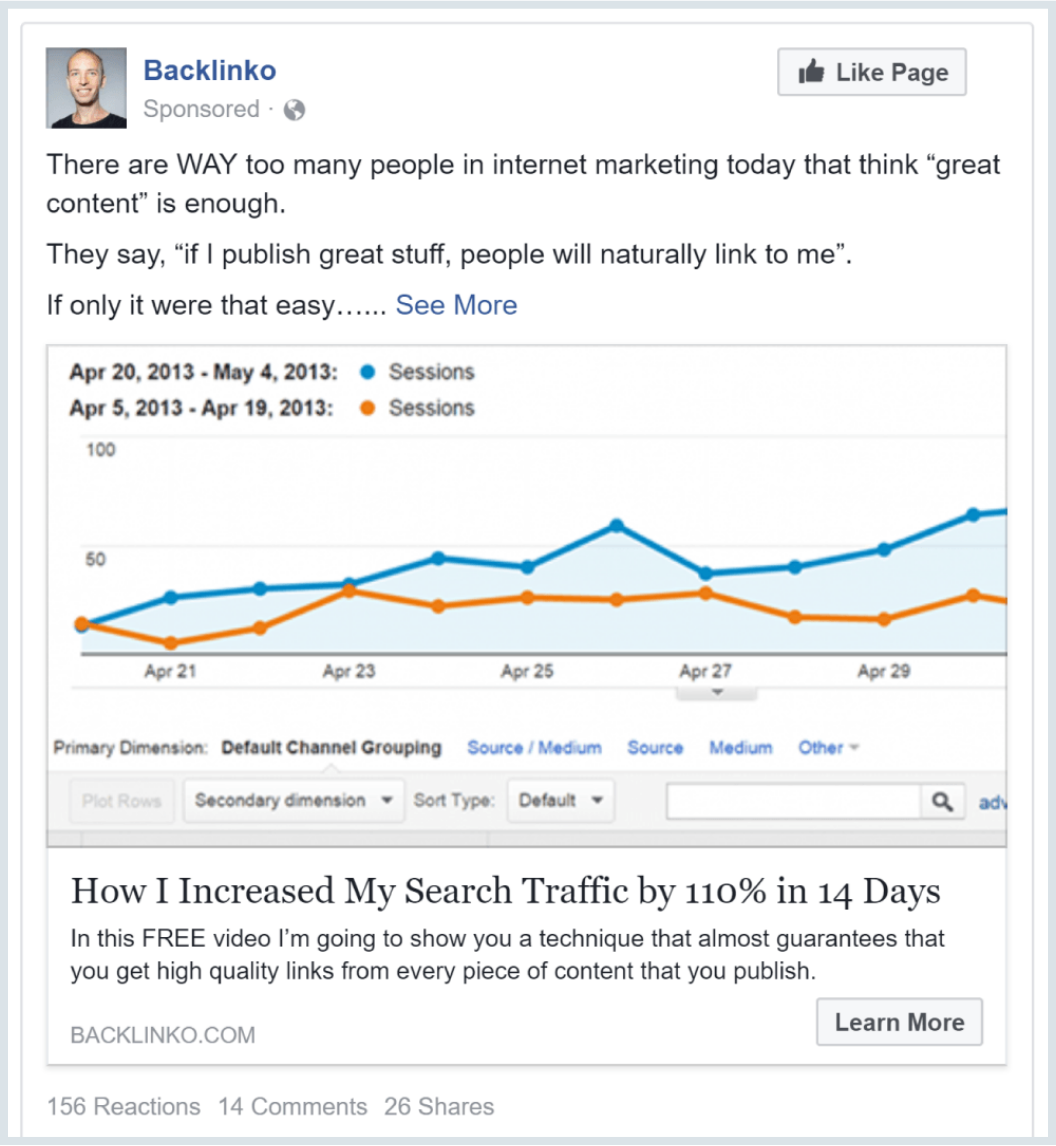
Which two sites are you most likely to click on? NYTimes.com and Simply Recipes of course!

In other words, you want people to know about your brand BEFORE they search in Google.

How can you increase your brand's awareness?

#1: First, try Facebook ads.

Even if people don't click and convert, Facebook ads can put your brand in front of lots of eyeballs.

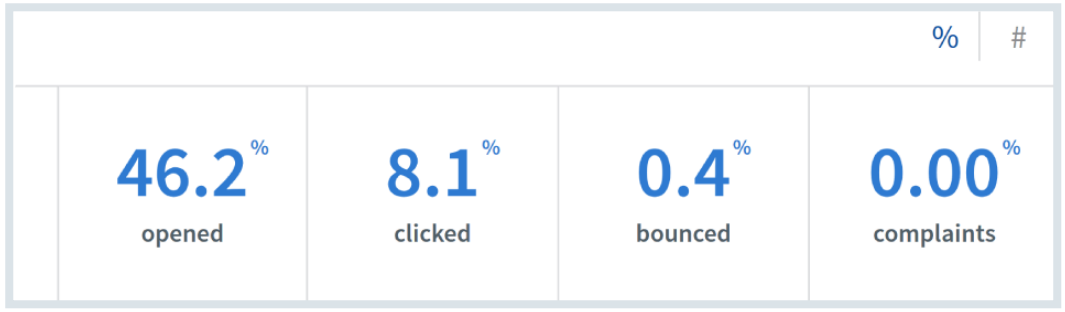

Backlinko
Sponsored ·
Like Page
There are WAY too many people in internet marketing today that think "great content" is enough.
They say, "if I publish great stuff, people will naturally link to me".
If only it were that easy…… See More
Apr 20, 2013 - May 4, 2013: Sessions
Apr 5, 2013 - Apr 19, 2013: Sessions
100
50
Apr 21
Apr 23
Apr 25
Apr 27
Apr 29
Primary Dimension: Default Channel Grouping
Source / Medium
Source
Medium
Other
Plot Rows
Secondary dimension
Sort Type:
Default
How I Increased My Search Traffic by 110% in 14 Days
In this FREE video I'm going to show you a technique that almost guarantees that you get high quality links from every piece of content that you publish.
BACKLINKO.COM
Learn More
156 Reactions 14 Comments 26 Shares

And when those eyeballs are scanning the search results, they're MUCH more likely to click on your result.

#2: Also, create an insanely valuable email newsletter.

Nothing increases brand awareness more than sending valuable content to people's inboxes.

In fact, my open rates are well above industry average because I only send good stuff:



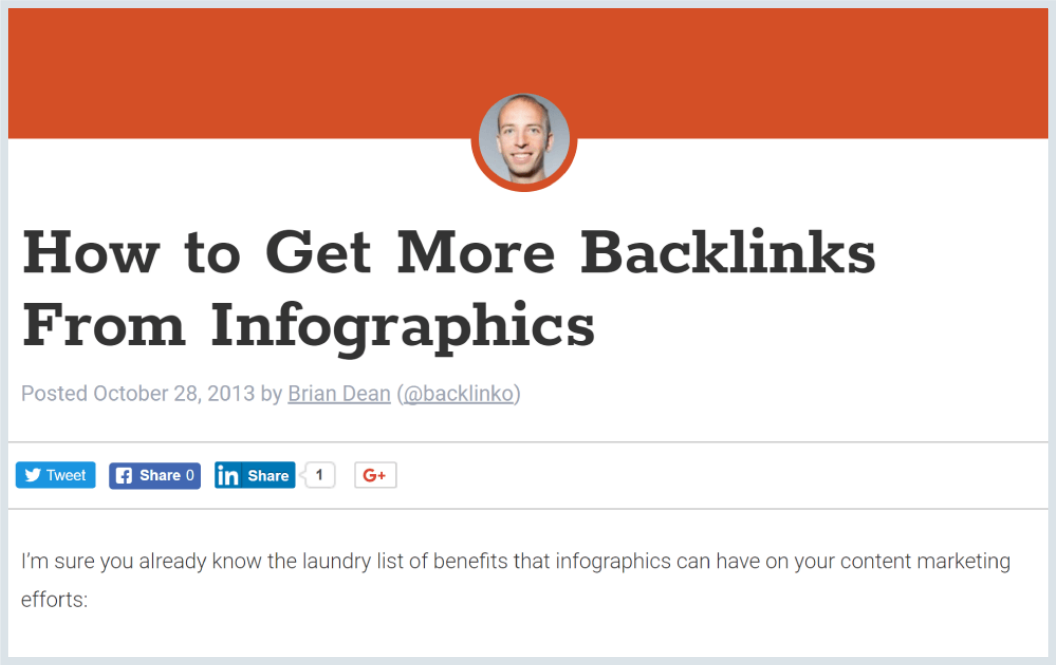
Needless to say, my subscribers have learned that my material is the best in the business. So when Backlinko shows up on page 1, they're much more likely to click on my result.

#3: Finally, do a “Content Blitz”

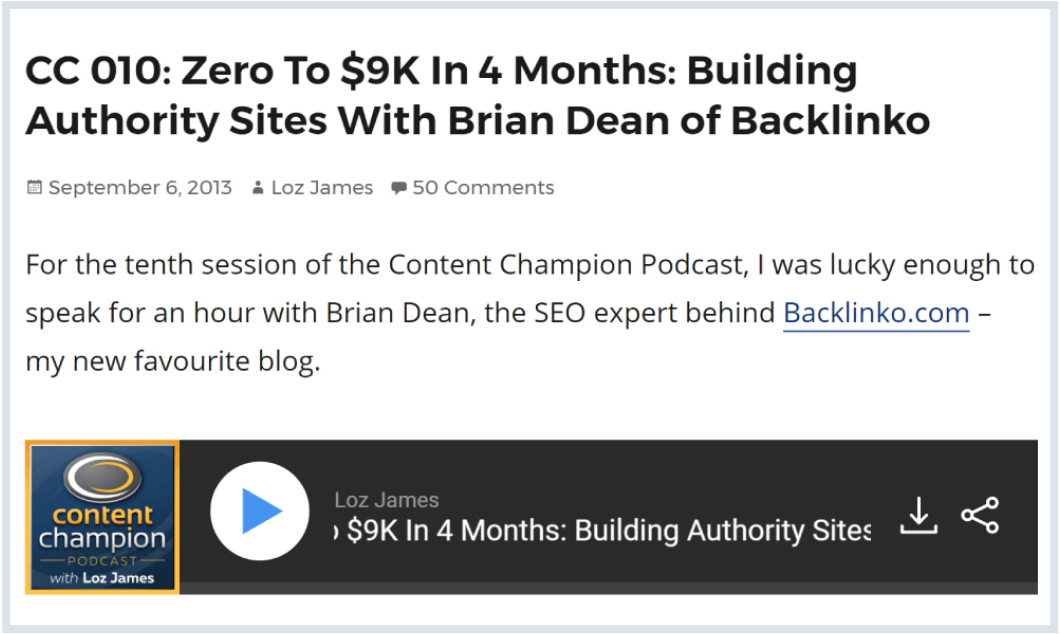
A “Content Blitz” is where you release a ton of content in a short period of time. And trust me: this is WAY more powerful than dripping content over the course of the year.

In fact, I used a Content Blitz when I first started Backlinko.

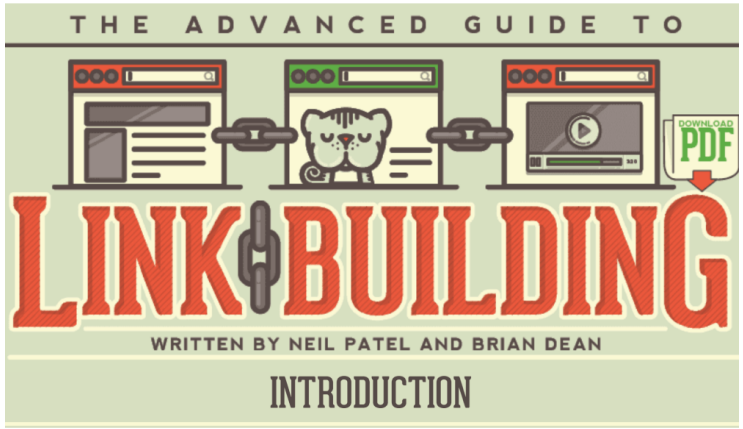
I published guest posts:


How to Get More Backlinks From Infographics
Posted October 28, 2013 by Brian Dean (@backlinko)
Tweet
Share 0
Share
1
G+
I'm sure you already know the laundry list of benefits that infographics can have on your content marketing efforts:

I went on Podcasts:


CC 010: Zero To $9K In 4 Months: Building Authority Sites With Brian Dean of Backlinko
September 6, 2013
Loz James
50 Comments
For the tenth session of the Content Champion Podcast, I was lucky enough to speak for an hour with Brian Dean, the SEO expert behind Backlinko.com – my new favourite blog.
content champion PODCAST with Loz James
Loz James
$9K In 4 Months: Building Authority Sites

I even co-authored a guide with Neil Patel:



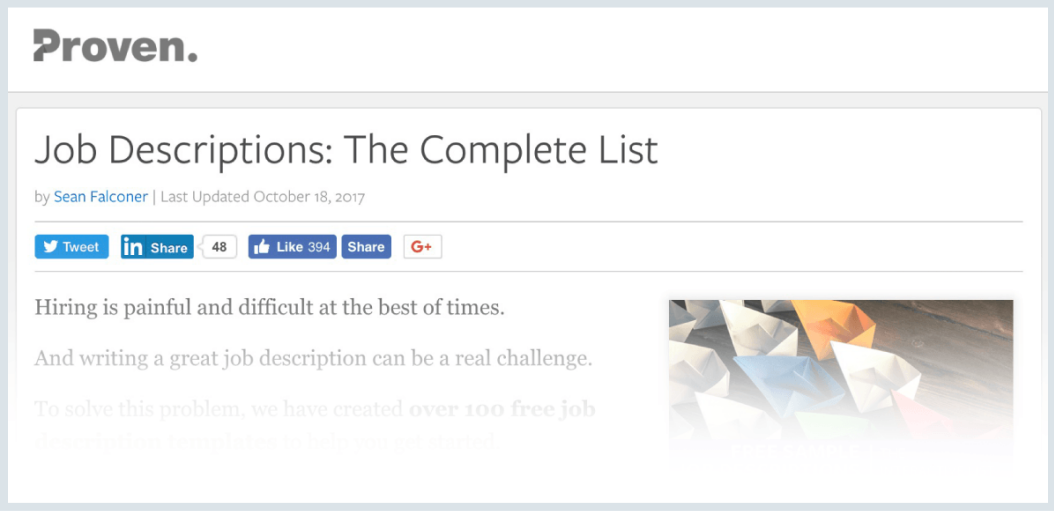
(All within a span of a few months) And this helped take Backlinko from "What's that?" to "What an awesome site!" in record time.

Turn “Zeros” to “Heros”

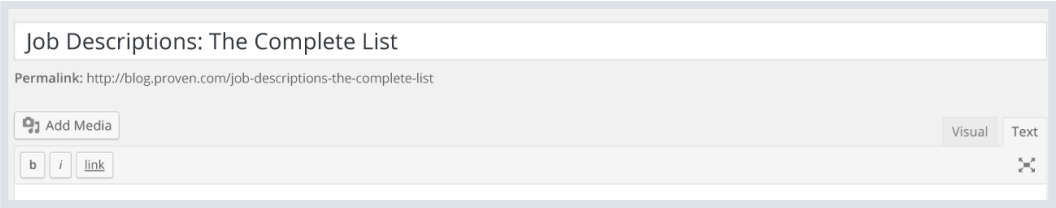
Do you have a page on your site that didn’t do as well as you’d hoped?

I have great news: if you go back and optimize that page for RankBrain, you can give it a SERIOUS rankings boost.

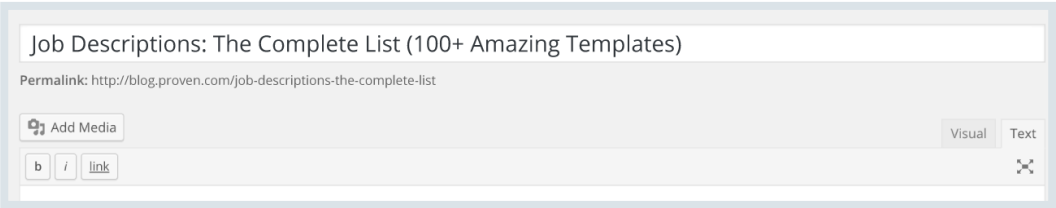
For example, Sean from Proven.com had a huge guide on his site that was doing OK... but wasn’t ranking as well as he had hoped.


Proven.
Job Descriptions: The Complete List
by Sean Falconer | Last Updated October 18, 2017
Tweet
Share
48
Like 394
Share
G+
Hiring is painful and difficult at the best of times.
And writing a great job description can be a real challenge.
To solve this problem, we have created over 100 free job

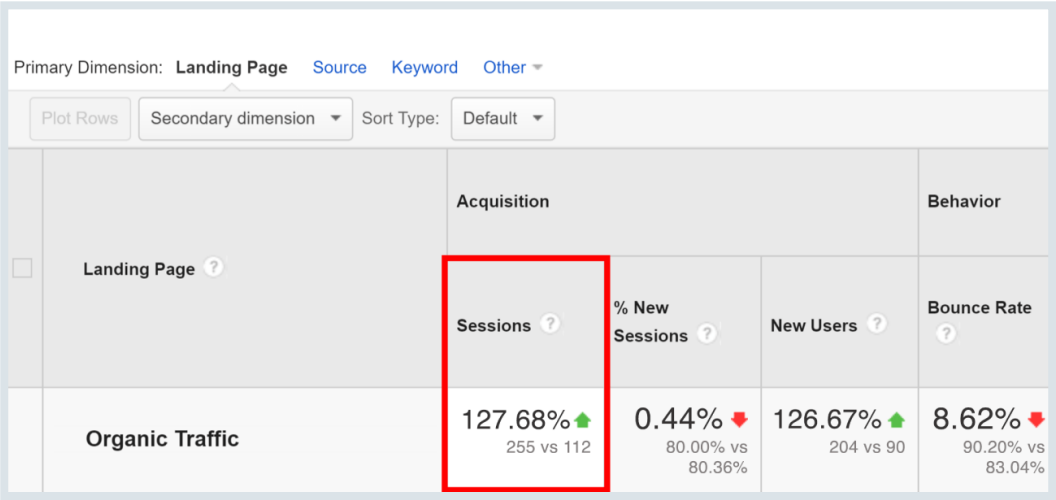
And Sean realized his page’s title tag wasn’t compelling to click on:



So he added a number, a Power Word and parentheses to his title tag:

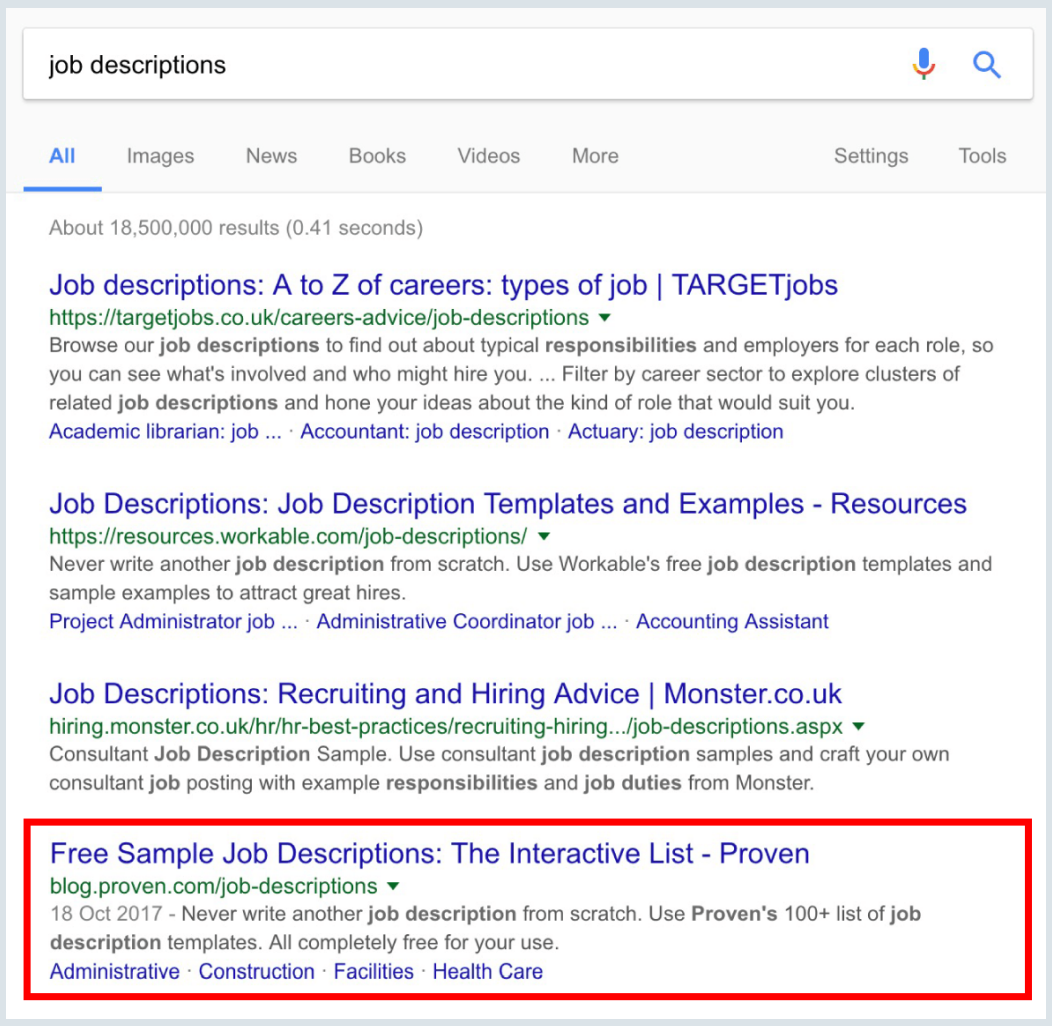


And this single change increased Sean's organic traffic to that page by nearly 128%:



Yes, some of that traffic boost was due to the simple fact that more people were clicking on Sean's result.

But the BIG part of the story was that RankBrain noticed the CTR increase... and nudged Sean's page up a few spots:


job descriptions
All
Images
News
Books
Videos
More
Settings
Tools
About 18,500,000 results (0.41 seconds)
Job descriptions: A to Z of careers: types of job | TARGETjobs
https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/job-descriptions
Browse our job descriptions to find out about typical responsibilities and employers for each role, so you can see what's involved and who might hire you. ... Filter by career sector to explore clusters of related job descriptions and hone your ideas about the kind of role that would suit you.
Academic librarian: job ... · Accountant: job description · Actuary: job description
Job Descriptions: Job Description Templates and Examples - Resources
https://resources.workable.com/job-descriptions/
Never write another job description from scratch. Use Workable's free job description templates and sample examples to attract great hires.
Project Administrator job ... · Administrative Coordinator job ... · Accounting Assistant
Job Descriptions: Recruiting and Hiring Advice | Monster.co.uk
hiring.monster.co.uk/hr/hr-best-practices/recruiting-hiring.../job-descriptions.aspx
Consultant Job Description Sample. Use consultant job description samples and craft your own consultant job posting with example responsibilities and job duties from Monster.
Free Sample Job Descriptions: The Interactive List - Proven
blog.proven.com/job-descriptions
18 Oct 2017 - Never write another job description from scratch. Use Proven's 100+ list of job description templates. All completely free for your use.
Administrative · Construction · Facilities · Health Care

Use LSI Keywords to Fill in "Content Gaps"

LSI Keywords are words and phrases related to your content's main topic.

Why are LSI Keywords important? Well, they give RankBrain the context they need to fully understand your page.

For example, let's say that you're writing a guide about link building.

LSI Keywords are things like:

- Backlinks
- Domain Authority
- Email outreach
- Anchor text

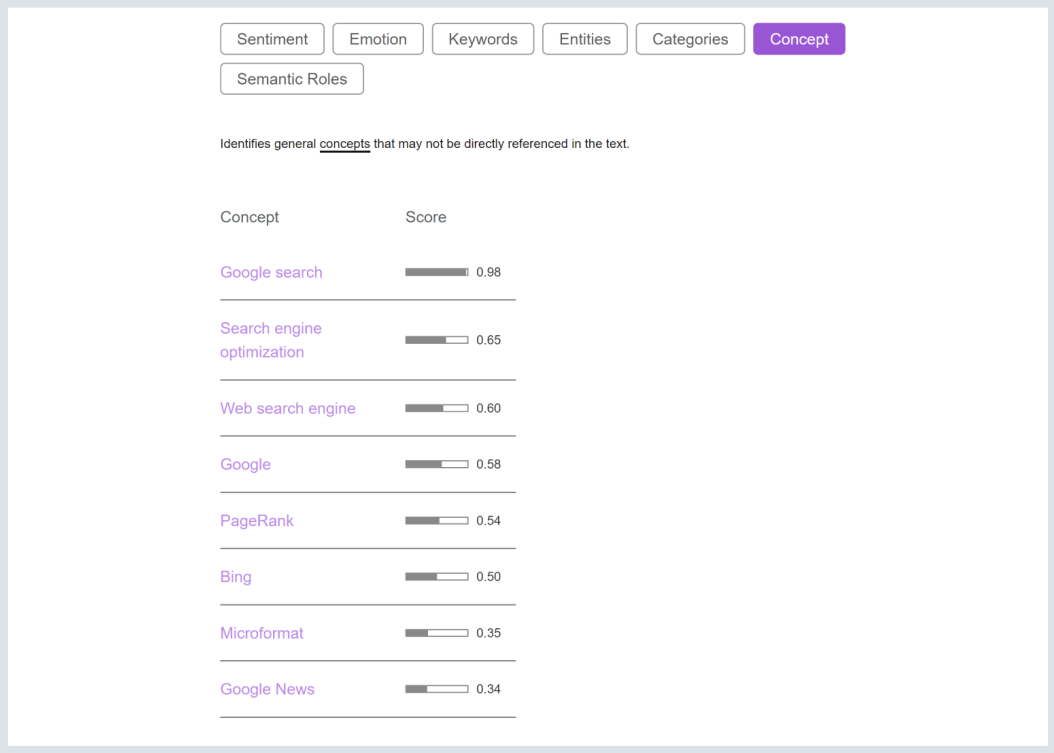
And when RankBrain sees that your content includes these terms, they're confident that your page is about link building...

...which means you're more likely to rank for keywords related to that topic.

You can uncover LSI keywords with the Watson Natural Language Understanding Tool.

This tool analyzes content that you give it for concepts, entities and categories.

For example, when I pasted in the first draft of this guide, it spit out concepts that were related to RankBrain.



The interesting part is that I didn't mention many of these terms in the guide. Like RankBrain, Watson understands what my content is about. Very cool.

And when you sprinkle these LSI keywords into your post, you'll confirm to RankBrain that your content is comprehensive.

Want more actionable SEO content like this? Then make sure to subscribe to my YouTube channel right now.

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